ATMA BODHA

SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

ATMA - BODHA

BHAGAWAN SRI SANKARACHARYA

BY

SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

MEDITATION

प्रातः स्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वं
सच्चित्सुखं परमहंसगतिं तुरीयम्।
यत् स्वप्नजागरसुषुप्तमवेति नित्यं
तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमहं न च भूतसंघः॥

Pratah Smarami Hrudi Samsphuradatma Tatvam
Sat Chit Sukham Parama Hamsa Gatim Tureeyam
Yat Swapna Jagara Sushuptamaveti Nityam
Tad Brahma Nishkalamaham Na Cha Bhootasanghah

In the early hours of the day I meditate upon the Essential Self clearly experiencible in the heart-cave... that which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss in nature ... that which is the Supreme Goal, the Paramahamsa State ... that which is the Fourth Plane of Consciousness ... which constantly illumines all experiences in the dream, waking and deep-sleep conditions ... I am that partless Brahman ... Not (this) assemblage of matter-envelopments.

INTRODUCTION

No scientific text book can be prescribed to the students without an initial chapter, giving the definition of the terms and terminologies that are used in the body of the book. The Scientist visualises the world from his view point. He sees truths that are not visible to others. And since he sees visions which are not the common property of all, in his language he will have to use unconventional words which have for him some special imports and secret suggestions. If these extraordinary words are not rightly understood by the teacher and the taught, transference of knowledge would be impossible. Therefore, in every text book of science, the first few chapters describe the categories.

Sufferings and sorrows form a part of life's game. There is none who has not undergone pressing agonies in his own day-to-day life, either physically or mentally or emotionally. Yet, nobody seems to invite them. All that we do is to avoid as far as possible this aspect of life coming in contact with us. The more we want to escape its cruel jaws, the more it takes an endless variety of subtler and sharper ways of attacking.

Physical ailments form but one tribe of hordes that barbarously attack us; even more relentless and cruel are our mental sufferings. As we progress in our knowledge of the curative processes for ameliorating the physical sufferings, we observe that the mind's ill-health affects the body much more than what one could imagine; and this kind of suffering proves all the more difficult to deal with. Mental disintegration is more dangerous, for, it brings about not only misery to the sufferer but a kind of dangerous disharmony in and excruciating intolerance with the surroundings of such an individual.

On the whole it means each one of us who is suffering (and is there anyone who is not?) from this inner malady is an unhappy centre spreading all around him unhappiness and restlessness. A solution to these problems, very complicated and extremely confusing to the average mind, is what we seek individually and collectively. The results of such investigations conducted by the ancient enquiries and the data collected from their personal experiences constitute the bulk of our scriptures.

Today instead of searching for any radical solution and specific cure for this problematic disease and consequent suffering in life, what man actually does in society is to collect around him various kinds of "*escape*-distractions" and compromise-dopes, through all kinds of foul methods. He vainly hopes to drown his sorrows in ever so many unhealthy indulgences. By these methods at best man succeeds in turning his mind away from the actual facts of life as they are. To analyse scientifically and to observe closely the nature and behaviour of our outer world-of-objects and the inner instruments-of-experience in us, are the methods employed in the Upanishads, by which the Seers have discovered a happy solution for the great problems of man and his life.

Vedanta is the Science of Life. It explains the art of living. It points out the perfect goal of existence and provides schemes and methods by which sincere seekers can make their pilgrimage easily successful. Since the teacher has to point out a goal transcending the ordinary realms of experiences, he has to borrow his vocabulary from the everyday language and present them, no doubt, strangely dressed up in special significances. Naturally, the obvious dictionary-meaning will not be a true guidance in digesting and assimilating the declarations of the scriptures.

The golden key, by which the scriptures are opened and its divine knowledge brought out, is found in the books like *Atma-Bodh*, which explain exhaustively the categories in Vedanta. Such volumes are called the *Prakarana-books.*

Knowledge available in the world of books is found in two types of records. Text books of the Science, explaining the theory and technique, are called the *Sastras,* and the books that explain the terms and terminologies used in the *Sastra* books are called the *Prakarana-books.* Panchadasi, Vivekachudamani, Tatvabodh, Atmabodh are some of the examples of the latter type of books. They explain the *Sastra,* and they do not contribute any original thought.

Sri Shankara took upon himself as his life's great mission, the reorientation of Hinduism. After having written his commentaries upon the sacred books of our culture, he provided the seekers with a voluminous devotional literature, singing his own love of the Lord.

In the days of his perfect maturity he took up his pen to write "introductory books," introducing the theme of Vedanta for the infants in the spiritual world. *Atma-Bodha* is one of them. This is not an original book in as much as there is not a single idea in it which is an entirely original contribution of Sri Shankara. Everyone of them is culled from the garden of the Upanishads, and strung together on the chord of his poetry, interspersed with his exquisite similes. This wonderful garland so offered by Shankara to adorn Mother Sruti is *Atma-Bodha.*

As a modern materialistic man comes to study more and more the contents of the Upanishad it is possible that he feels cheated of the cheaper joys of his previous easier life of mental distractions and physical dissipations. This negative feeling of a nameless sad regret saps out all enthusiasm in the student. But this feeling comes only so long as one has not fully realised the fact that the usual broadway destructions have a knack of wearing away too soon their enchanting fascinations; one gets quickly bored of such superficialities.

An intelligent person very quickly loses all his attractions for such things. He discovers that his mind has a tendency to fly away from all its objects of entertainment, and come to torment itself by its own thoughts, that are, indeed, very unpleasant for itself. A man of indiscriminate intellect never questions why it is so, but instead he hurriedly discovers a new set of excitements and a fresh pattern of distractions to engage his mind's momentary fancy. He may even turn to God of the usual formalistic religions—visit churches, mosques or temples, give away something in charity, build a House of God or a hospital, run to a hall of sermons and even take up to some forms of prayer. But all of them are again to him a new variety of distraction to keep his mind away from weeping at itself, and thus escape its own suicidal brutalities.

People, who follow thus religion as an escape from themselves, ultimately come to gain nothing except, perhaps, a lingering sorrow, dulled by a blind faith, that benumbs his very capacity to perceive his own tragedies of life! Scientific detachment, honest observation, logical conclusions and heroic decisions, alone can help an individual to come away from his own life's fallacies. *Atma-Bodha* supplies all these requisites and Shankara has made this scientific treatise a chiselled beauty with a distinct cadence and rhythm of its own.

The poet in Shankara is let loose in these sixty-eight stanzas. No verse is here which has not one simile or other. Each is a picture ... a sure and striking example. These examples are real hammer-strokes that nail the elusive Vedantic ideals on to the immature comprehension of all early students.

They are all such striking examples, so pregnant with suggestions that to ruminate upon them is in itself a profitable meditation for the new initiates.

May the Infinite Effulgence, the Silent Witness of all our actions, bless us all.

CHINMAYANANDA.

आत्मबोधः

तपोभिः क्षीणपापानां
शान्तानां वीतरागिणाम् ।
मुमुक्षूणामपेक्ष्योऽय-
मात्मबोधो विधीयते ॥ १ ॥

Tapobhih Ksheenapapanam
Santanam Veetaraginam
Mumukshoonam-Apekshyoyam
Atmabodho Vidheeyate 1

तपोभिः—by austerities, **क्षीणपापानां**—for those who have purified themselves, **शान्तानां**—for those who are calm, **वीतरागिणां**—for those who are free from cravings, **मुमुक्षूणाम्**—for those who are desirous of liberation, **अपेक्ष्यः**—worthy of attending, **अयं**—this, **आत्मबोधः**—Knowledge of the Self, **विधीयते**—being composed (by me).

1. I am composing the **ATMA-BODHA**, *this treatise of the Knowledge of the Self, for those who have purified themselves by austerities and are peaceful in heart and calm, who are free from cravings and are desirous of liberation.*

As a preamble, Sri Shankara, the great world-teacher, himself a person of full realisation, lays down certain qualifications for those who wish to take up the study of this text. The stanza also indicates the four aspects of the theme discussed, technically called as the *Anubandha Chatushtayam.*

Such an introduction is justified when we recognise that Sri Shankara was prescribing here an easy text book. As he himself was a true educationist, he knew what type of students he has in his mind to whom he wanted to deliver the lessons. A high sounding style, erudite discussions, elaborate argumentations etc., would be useless in serving the ordinary students who have discovered in themselves a growing enthusiasm to understand a little of the Vedantic philosophy.

In the stanza the term *Atma-Bodha* suggests the subject dealt with; the word *Mumukshu* (seeker of burning aspirations) suggests that the object aimed at is the emancipation of the individuality from all its sense of bondage; and those who are fit for the study of this text are those who have all the four qualifications:[1] *(a)* discrimination of the Real and the un-Real; *(b)* detachment from the un-Real; *(c)* the six-fold wealth of goodness such as calmness, etc., and lastly *(d)* the compelling desire for Self re-discovery.

One can claim to have read volumes of books and exhausted a library-full of the printed matter from its shelves; yet, he may still be useless in the practical application of his knowledge. In the study of philosophy a mere book-knowledge will be ineffective when the man of study enters the field of activities. Every earnest seeker must *digest* the knowledge gained until they grow in him into convictions which can then be translated into actions.

When a book is written by a teacher, it is always intended for a certain type of students he has in his mind. Every text book is addressed to a certain class of students having some given qualities. They alone will be most benefitted by that given text book. In the opening stanza of the *Atma-Bodh,* Shankara is trying to explain who are to be his audience whom alone he is addressing in this tiny book.

Every attempt at living in self-control—in all our contacts with the outer-world, wherein all the efforts are dedicated for the high purpose of evolving ourselves into a diviner being—is called *Tapas.* From pilgrimage and fasting to *Japa* and *Dhyana* all spiritual endeavours at Self-control are different types of *Tapas.* Through these methods one's sins *(Papas)* become weaker.

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1. For an elaborate treatment of these qualifications please read Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani.*

Sin is not an action in itself, but it is the tendency *(Vasana)* to live and think negatively, which is left over in our mind as a result of our own wrong actions. These sinful tendencies become weak when for a time we practice self-control.

When we have thus quietened our physical agitations through conscious and divinely dedicated self-control *(Tapas)* the natural result is a growing sense of calmness in the bosom. And when a mind has thus calmed down, in it the rate of fluctuations created by desires and attachments will also get reduced to a minimum.

An individual—who has thus *(a)* weakened his wrong tendencies through *Tapas, (b)* who has consequently found in himself a relatively greater mental calmness, *(c)* in whom the desire-agitations are temporarily at rest,—if he be, *(d)* one who is a sincere seeker wanting to liberate himself from his known personality-shackles, felt in his own within, he is the one who is fit for the study of the *Atma-Bodha.*

This stanza does not disqualify any one from reading and studying the text, but only suggests items of inner adjustments by which a student can make himself better tuned up to the contents of this book and come to understand better the theme discussed in it.

बोधोऽन्यसाधनेभ्यो हि
साक्षन्मोक्षैकसाधनम् ।
पाकस्य वह्निवज्ज्ञानं
विना मोक्षो न सिध्यति ॥ २ ॥

Bodhonya-Sadhanebhyo Hi
Sakshan-Mokshaikasadhanam
Pakasya Vahnivat-Gyanam
Vina Moksho Na Sidhyati 2

बोधः—knowledge (of the Self), **अन्यसाधनेभ्यः**—In comparison with other contributory causes, **हि**—indeed, **साक्षात्**—direct, **मोक्षैकसाधनं**—the one means for liberation, **पाकस्य**—for cooking, **वह्निवत्**—just as the fire, **ज्ञानं**—knowledge, **विना**—without, **मोक्षः** —emancipation, **न**—not, **सिध्यति**—to be accomplished.

2. Just as the fire is the direct *cause for cooking, so without Knowledge no emancipation can be had. Compared with all other*

forms of discipline Knowledge of the Self is the one direct *means for liberation.*

In the previous stanza having stated so much about the need for the practice of austerity and self-control, etc., one may misunderstand from it that discipline alone may lead one to the goal divine. To remove that misunderstanding it is stated that Knowledge alone is the one *direct* means for liberation.

The example given here, and in almost every one of the subsequent verses is to illustrate the case in point as clearly as possible to the new entrant in the field of Vedanta. In cooking food, items such as vegetables, rice, spices, etc., are "contributory" causes; but by themselves they can never constitute food. Fire alone can accomplish the cooking; fire is the *direct* cause. Similarly, the performance of rituals, the offering of gifts, the practice of austerities, control of the mind, the study of the scriptures, the use of the discriminative intellect are all, no doubt, helpful factors which aid one's spiritual growth, but they do not by themselves directly lead one to liberation. Liberation is possible only when the true Knowledge of our own existence is realised, or the glory of our Self rediscovered. This point is elaborated in the next stanza.

अविरोधितया कर्म
नाऽविद्यां विनिवर्तयेत् ।
विद्याविद्यां निहन्त्येव
तेजस्तिमिरसङ्घवत् ॥ ३ ॥

Avirodhitaya Karma
Na-vidyam Vinivartayet
Vidya-Avidyam Nihantyeva
Tejas-Timirasanghavath 3

अविरोधितया—for, not being opposed (to ignorance), **कर्म**—action, **न**—not, **अविद्यां**—ignorance, **विनिवर्तयेत्**—destroys, **विद्या**—knowledge, **अविद्यां**—ignorance, **निहन्ति**—destroys, **एव**—verily, **तेजः**—light, **तिमिरसङ्घवत्**—as deep darkness.

3. Action cannot destroy ignorance, for it is not in conflict with or opposed to ignorance. Knowledge does verily destroy ignorance as light destroys deep darkness.

Why is it not possible for the austerities and discipline to give what Knowledge can offer us? The word Knowledge is used here in a figurative sense. The attainment of Knowledge really means the re-discovery of the Self in us which has never been non-existent. It is like the dreamer gaining the knowledge of the waker; then alone can the dreamer's dream-sorrow end. If the Atman be, as described in the scriptures, ever-present, all-pervasive and complete, etc., then It is not to be striven for and obtained from somewhere, because, It is already within us. Therefore, even divine actions do not, in the sense of a direct cause and effect, lead to the Knowledge of the Self. It only helps to clean the inner equipments of perception, the mirror in which we can see the true and the real nature of our own Self.

Supposing there is a room in darkness. Sweep it for hours or let an army of men carry the darkness in baskets and pour it out, the room will be still in darkness! Sweeping is not the right method of removing darkness. Now let us take a light in our hand and enter the dark chamber. However thick the darkness be, in a moment it will be illumined. Similarly, the ignorance *(Ajnana)* in us that envelops the Pure Light of Knowledge has seemingly veiled It 'as though covered with ignorance'. The luminous Consciousness, the Self, is ever bright, and the enveloping ignorance has only to be brushed aside. Remove the misunderstanding about our true nature, and the Atman stands revealed. One need not *'discover'* It somewhere, but one has only to remove the veil of *'Ajnana'* when It is rediscovered. In this sense only it is stated here that action cannot destroy ignorance; Knowledge alone is the antidote for ignorance.

परिच्छिन्न इवाज्ञाना-
त्तन्नाशे सति केवलः।
स्वयं प्रकाशते ह्यात्मा
मेघापायेंऽशुमानिव ॥ ४ ॥

Parichina Iva Agyanath
Tannase Sati Kevalah
Swayam Prakasate Hi Atma
Meghapaye-Amsumaniva 4

परिच्छिन्न—finite, **इव**—as if, **अज्ञानात्**—because of ignorance, **तत्**—that, **नाशे सति**—when destroyed, **केवलः**—alone, **स्वयं**—by itself, **प्रकाशते**—reveals, **हि**—verily, **आत्मा**—the Self **मेघ**—cloud, **अपाये**—when pass away, **अंशुमान्**—the Sun, **इव**—like.

4. The Soul appears to be finite because of ignorance. When ignorance is destroyed the Self which does not admit of any multiplicity truly reveals itself by itself: like the Sun when the clouds pass away.

Practically the same main idea contained in the last stanza is elaborated here. When it was stated that Knowledge *alone* destroys ignorance, it suggested that mere ritualistic actions in themselves could not bring about the desired result. We need not make the Sun shine by any means whatsoever. It is ever-bright, high up in the sky, by itself illumining the world all the seasons round. It is the passing clouds that hide the vision and glory of this life-giving luminary, the Sun. As the clouds pass away the Sun behind gets revealed.

The Self is Infinite. There is in fact no multiplicity or plurality in that One Homogeneous Being, the wielder of all destiny. But it is because of our misunderstanding and the consequent superimpositions that we come to labour under the ignorance about this Supreme Being. It alone exists as the illuminator, and 'It' alone makes Its presence known by Its life-giving powers. Truly, therefore, this Atman in Its Supreme glory is unparalleled in Its existence, and reveals in Its own *Sat-chit* nature, by Itself. Those who are qualified to experience this Truth are those who have no clinging attachment to the enchanting objects of the world outside.

अज्ञानकलुषं जीवं
ज्ञानाभ्यासाद्विनिर्मलम् ।

कृत्वा ज्ञानं स्वयं नश्ये-
ज्जलं कतकरेणुवत् ॥ ५ ॥

Agyanakalusham Jeevam
Gyana-Abyasat-Vi Nirmalam
Kritva Gyanam Swayam Nasyet
Jalam Kataka-Renuvat 5

अज्ञानकलुषं—stained by ignorance, **जीवं**—*Jivatman* (the Self that has been contaminated by ignorance), **ज्ञानाभ्यासात्**—from constant practice of knowledge, **विनिर्मलं**—pure, **कृत्वा**—having made, **ज्ञानं**—knowledge, **स्वयं**—itself, **नश्येत्**—disappears, **जलम्**—water, **कतकरेणुवत्**—as the powder of the *'Kataka-nut'*.

5. Constant practice of knowledge purifies the Self ('Jivatman'), *stained by ignorance, and then disappears itself—as the powder of the* 'Kataka-nut' *settles down after it has cleansed the muddy water.*

An individual is here in this stanza defined as the Self that has been 'contaminated' by the ignorance. Spiritual ignorance gives rise to the agitations of the intellect and the blabberings of the mind. The mind-intellect-equipment "reflects" the Light of Consciousness and the Self thus conditioned in the mind-and-intellect is the 'individuality' *(Jiva).* The one suffering the limitations of matter is this ego which is comparable with our own reflections that we see in mirrors. It is but natural that we look distorted if the reflecting surfaces are concave or convex.

The ugliness of our reflections can end only when the reflecting surfaces are either destroyed or straightened. The perversions of the individual can be ended only when the mind-intellect has become steady and clean. An absolutely cleaned and steadied mind is no more a mind since "mind is but the thought-flow". Where the mind has ended there the ego-centre perceived so long, existing as an individuality-sense, rebounds back to its original nature, the Self.

The quietness of the mind and the ultimate sublimation of all its thought-currents is a single process accomplished by meditation *Gyana-Abhyasa.* The process of negating our identifications with the

false matter-envelopments and asserting our divine spiritual nature, constitute the art of meditation and this process is later on explained exhaustively in the stanzas that follow in this very same text-book.

If the continuous memory of *"I am the matter"* is the ego-centre, no doubt, it can be replaced by another constant thought-current as *"I am the Self"*. But then, there is again a continuous "flow-of-thought" and, therefore, even that experience *(Vritti Gyanam)* is only a conditioned and finite one which cannot be **Absolute.**

This doubt is answered in the stanza under discussion when it says that meditation, after having sublimated the mind, ends itself. Our 'attempts to sleep' ends when we start sleeping. The example given here is of the 'cleaning-nut', the powder of which was used in ancient India for cleaning muddy water. During the rainy season, when the well of river waters were all muddy, they used to put the *Kathaka*-dust, on the surface of the water in their buckets. The powder becomes slightly slimy and forms a continuous film. Being denser, it settles down carrying along with it all the minute particles of dirt held suspended in the water. In this process not only the dirt goes down but the agent we had used also settles down leaving the clear water in the bucket, which can be decanted and used. In modern times, we use in towns a little alum which also acts much the same way.

संसार: स्वप्नतुल्यो हि
रागद्वेषादिसङ्कुल: ।
स्वकाले सत्यवद्भाति
प्रबोधे सत्यसद्भवेत् ॥ ६ ॥

Samsara-Swapnatulyo Hi
Ragadweshadi Sankulah
Swa-Kale Satyavat-Bhati
Prabodhe-Satyasat Bhavet 6

संसार:—the world, **स्वप्नतुल्य:**—like a dream, **हि**—verily, **राग-द्वेषादि संकुल:**—full of attachments, aversions, etc., **स्वकाले**—in its duration, **सत्यवत्**—to be real, **भाति**—appears, **प्रबोधे सति**—when awake, **असत्**—unreal, **भवेत्**—appears.

6. The world which is full of attachments, aversions, etc., is like a dream. It appears to be real, as long as it continues but appears to be unreal when one is awake (i.e., *when true wisdom dawns).*

It is common knowledge that in a dream the mind creates for itself a fanciful existence. Unfulfilled desires, passions and emotions which we carry in our minds when we go to bed often show themselves in our dreams. That is why he who has a balanced mind and who has brought his mind well under control, who is not tossed by anger, pride and petty jealousies, likes and dislikes, does not wander away into wild dreams created by his feeble mind. It is the weak person that is a victim of this unhealthy sign of unfulfilled desires and thoughts.

In the dream-world we have a variety of experiences.[1] In the waking-state also experiences exist, but we are not prepared to accept the waking-state as a prolonged dream. The reason is the firm grip which *'Avidya'* has over us preventing us from accepting the reality of the Real. We are not fully qualified ourselves to understand and realise the ephemeral nature of the existence of the objects around us, and of our own exact relationship with our body, mind and intellect.

The dream is quite real to us so long as we are in it. When once we wake up from it, we realise the unreality of the entire experience. Similarly, when once we go deep into the layers of the matter envelopments, and experience the All-pervading Spirit, the pluralistic existence rolls off and we feel awakened to that Supreme Self which alone is thereafter experienced as the Real. Therefore, awake from the unreal existence by tearing asunder the ignorance *(Avidya)* that is covering the Real Knowledge, and let us realise the Bliss nature of our own Self.

तावत्सत्यं जगद्भाति
शुक्तिकारजतं यथा।
यावन्न ज्ञायते ब्रह्म
सर्वाधिष्ठानमद्वयम् ॥ ७ ॥

Tavat Satyam Jagat Bhati
Suktika Rajatam Yatha

1. For a more detailed and exhaustive treatment of this Dream-analogy read Swamiji's *Discourses on Mandukya and Karika.*

Yavat Na Gyayathe Brahma
Sarvadhishtana-Madvayam 7

तावत्—(as a correlative of, **यावत्**) so long as, **सत्यं**—True, **जगत्**—Jagat, **भाति**—appears, **शुक्तिका रजतं**—silver in the mother-of-pearl, **यथा**—like, **यावत्**—(as a relative of **तावत्**) as long as, **न**—not, **ज्ञायते**—is realised, **ब्रह्म**—Brahman, **सर्वाधिष्ठानं**—the substratum for all, **अद्वयम्**—one without a second.

7. The Jagat *appears to be true* (Satyam) *so long as Brahman, the substratum, the basis of all this creation, is not realised. It is like the illusion of silver in the mother-of-pearl.*

Jagat is not to be understood as the gross outer world only, as we usually conceive it to be. It is the 'total experience' of an individual in the three states of existence—the Waking, Dream and Deep-sleep states, experienced through the different types of equipments—physical, mental and intellectual. In short, *Jagat* includes the world-of-objects cognised for enjoyment as forms, smells, etc., through the sense-organs; as feelings and emotions experienced by the mind; and as ideas and ideologies lived by the intellect. The 'total experiences' gained through our gross, subtle and causal bodies is *Jagat.*

As long as one has *not* entered into the Divine state of God-consciousness, through the realisation of the One Absolute Truth, which is the substratum for all *(Sarvadhishtan),* which pervades all manifestations, so long does the *Jagat* appear to be very true and fully real. As long as we are in the dream-state, we cannot disbelieve that the dream we are experiencing is unreal. When once we get up from the dream, we do not again mourn for what we might have lost in the dream, or rejoice over what we might have gained therein. Also, just as on waking up all the variety experienced in the dream-state vanishes to become one with the waking-mind, so too, on our "spiritual awakening," all the plurality of this multiple world and all our different experiences will merge into that One Supreme Essence, the substratum for every thing.

When we have realised this Supreme Truth and have begun to

experience the presence of the Eternal God-principle, the Infinite Reality, the highest plane of Pure Consciousness, which runs in and through us and everywhere, we no more mistake the *Jagat* as real or as existing apart from That, just as we no more mistake the mother-of-pearl to be a silver piece when we have once recognised its worthless calcium content.

In the illusion of a snake on a rope, without the rope, the substratum, the superimposition of the snake is impossible. Likewise, without the Self, the Supreme, which is Immortal, Imperceptible and Changeless, and which is referred to here as the substratum *(Adhishtan),* even the delusion of a *Jagat* is not possible.

उपादानेऽखिलाधारे
जगन्ति परमेश्वरे।
सर्गस्थितिलयान्यान्ति
बुद्बुदानीव वारिणि ॥ ८ ॥

Upadane Akhiladhare
Jaganti Parameswere
Sargasthiti Layanyanti
Bud-Bu-Daneeva Varini 8

उपादाने—which is the material cause, **अखिलाधारे**—which is the support of everything, **जगन्ति**—the worlds, **परमेश्वरे**—in the Supreme Self, **सर्गस्थितिलयान्**—rising, existing and dissolving, **यान्ति**–pass away, **बुद्बुदानि**—bubbles, **इव**—like, **वारिणी**—in the waters.

8. Like bubbles in the water, the worlds rise, exist and dissolve in the Supreme Self, which is the material cause and the prop of everything.

The Hindu thinkers of the past seem to have given a more serious attention to the principle of creation, than many of the other religionists. Their acute analytical approach to problems of life can

in its thoroughness and completeness, beat even many of the modern scientific methods.

Nothing new is ever created by anyone. The change of form, name, nature, and conditions is all that is creation. Reconversion alone is creation. In thus creating a thing three essential factors are necessary and they are together in their aggregate called as the "cause".

In any creation three types of "causes" must come into play. The *Material* cause, the *Efficient* cause and the *Instrumental* cause. In the case of a potter making a pot on his wheel with mud, the potter is the *Efficient cause*, the wheel is the *Instrumental* cause and the mud is the *Material* cause *(Upadana Karan)*. In all pot-creations in the world, the potter is separate from the mud; in the creative process of the finite emerging from the Infinite, the *Material* cause and the *Efficient* cause are one and the same. Just as bubbles in water are but water rising in water, existing in water and when they burst merging back to become water, so too is the plurality, cognised by the body-mind-intellect, all a play of names-and-forms upon the Infinite Consciousness, the Eternal Substratum Divine.

But the Supreme Brahman undergoes no change; it being Absolute, It can suffer no modification in Itself. How can then the world of multiplicity originate from that Brahman? It can only be an appearance; there is no real manifestation—surely, no factual creation.

सच्चिदात्मन्यनुस्यूते
नित्ये विष्णौ प्रकल्पिताः।
व्यक्तयो विविधास्सर्वा
हाटके कटकादिवत् ॥ ९ ॥

Sacchidatmanya-Nusyute
Nitye-Vishnow Prakalpitah
Vyaktayo Vividhah Sarvah
Hatake Katakadivat 9

सच्चिदात्मनि—whose nature is Existence-Intelligence, **अनुस्यूते**-

which is All-pervading, **नित्ये**—Eternal, **विष्णौ**—upon Vishnu (one whose stride is the largest), **प्रकल्पिताः**—projected by imagination, **व्यक्तयः**—manifested, **विविधाः**—manifold, **सर्वाः**—all, **हाटके**—out of gold, **कटकादिवत्**—just as bracelets and other ornaments.

9. All the manifested world of things and beings are projected by imagination upon the substratum which is the Eternal All-pervading Vishnu, *whose nature is Existence-Intelligence; just as the different ornaments are all made out of the same gold.*

An ordinary gross mind can never lift itself up to grasp easily the subtle truths of the highest Vedanta. Very frequently innumerable examples are to be repeated, to push the subtle philosophical ideas into the comprehension of an ordinary intellect. When they are quite apt, the students become pleasantly aghast at the revelations, and the Truth becomes more and more clear to them.

In any creation there must be as we have already noted, three fundamental and separate causes—*(a)* the *material cause* or the raw material, *(b)* the *instrumental cause,* the equipment with which the object is created and *(c)* the *efficient cause,* the intelligence that creates or works at the material with the instruments.

In all creations the three causes exist separately, and the material cause transforms itself into the created new thing; but in the case of the creation of the world, the objects created are *not* different from the creator. The material cause, the one Supreme Paramatman, Itself manifests as different objects, for, in the Infinitude of Its existence, there cannot be a second Infinite.

The waves in the ocean cannot claim a separate existence apart from the waters of the ocean. Likewise this outer world, and our own world-of-experiences in the physical, mental and intellectual spheres rise from, exist in, and merge back into that One Supreme Awareness which glows in everybody, and like the bubbles that form and burst upon the surface of the water, different experiences in different bosoms rise and fall before that One Consciousness.

Here 'Vishnu' is not to be understood as the four-armed Divine Deity of the Trinity, as the Puranas often describe. No doubt, when we conceive of a shape of the pens to the gold, when a gold-ring goes

out of shape, or even when the ring is melted nothing happens to the gold, so too, even when the entire universe tumbles down, nothing happens to the Eternal Reality: It is ever changeless: Immutable.

यथाकाशो हृषीकेशो
नानोपाधिगतो विभुः ।
तद्भेदाद्भिन्नवद्भाति
तन्नाशे केवलो भवेत् ॥ १० ॥

Yatha-Kaso Hrishikeso
Nanopadhi Gato Vibhuh
Tad-Bhedat-Bhinnavat-Bhati
Tad-Nase Kevalo-Bhavet 10

यथा—just as, **आकाशः**—space, **हृषीकेशः**—the Omnipresent Truth, **नानोपाधिगतः**—associated with various conditionings, **विभुः**—the All-pervading, **तद्भेदात्**—on account of their *(Upadhis)* manifold nature distinct from each other, **भिन्नवद्भाति**—appears to be diverse, **तन्नाशे**—on the destruction of these Upadhis, **केवलः**—One, **भवेत्**—becomes.

10. The All-pervading Akasa *appears to be diverse on account of its association with various conditionings* (Upadhis) *which are different from each other. Space becomes one on the destruction of these limiting adjuncts: So also the Omnipresent Truth appears to be diverse on account of Its association with the various* Upadhis *and becomes one on the destruction of these* Upadhis.

Behind all this seeming multiplicity of existence and the manifold nature of our experience, the One Unchanging substratum persists in all Its splendor. This, we variously call as the Brahman, the Paramatman, the Sat-Chit-Ananda, etc. This Supreme Being alone is the dynamic Truth, and no differentiation is possible in this state of Absolute Reality. How then do we come to feel the plurality in the outer world of innumerable objects, which we experience now as so real? If the spirit that pulsates through *all* the objects in and

around us is that One-without-a-second, why this conflict is being created by the perception of plurality in us?

We discover the necessary courage to enquire in this fashion, because we are not prepared to accept all statements of truth, merely because they had been declared by the ancient and the learned. Both our head and heart must assimilate any new idea before it can become really our own. And, in fact, then alone can these philosophical ideas readily reach our heart to guide us in our day-to-day life and its transactions.

The word *Hrishikesa* can be interpreted both in its mythological tradition as well as in its ancient usage. Taking it as *Hris Kesa* it means "one whose hair is made short". In the battlefield at Kurukshetra we meet the Lord with all his curly hairs rolled up or clipped. In the ancient sense the term *Hrishikesa* can be dissolved as *Hrishika + Isa = Hrishikesa.* No doubt, *Hrishika* is an old and obsolete word meaning 'sense-organs', and so the epithet means "Lord of our sense-organs". The sense-organs can function only so long as the life exists in us. As long as the Self, which is the Lord of the senses, reigns in this body, so long only are we enabled to see, smell, touch, speak, etc. It is the one and only Spark of Life that pervades everything. Without the flow of Its enlivening spirit, nothing will operate in this body or exist in the outside world. That Principle of Life, that Universal Spirit, that All-pervading Brahman is worthily called *(Vibhu)* meaning, the All-pervading.

This All-pervading *(Vibhu)* Truth, the Brahman, appears to be the pluralistic world, as we have many times stated, because of the various conditionings *(Upadhis)* through which It functions. For example, we construct different rooms in the vast open space *(Akasa)* and then we recognise distinct compartments in the one space as the drawing-room, the bed-room, the living-room, etc., and then we ourselves come to treat the one *Akasa* as a multiple factor. We consider the numerous small spaces created by such a division as so many different room-spaces. But when the walls are pulled down, the room-spaces having separate individual existence end, but thereby the *Akasa* in none of them is destroyed. The room-spaces become the one all-space.

Similarly, when an individual-ego associates with its various

limiting factors *(Upadhis)* the cause for this world-of-plurality comes to manifest. When once these forces of limitation are destroyed, the One Truth that is the basis of existence for everything shines forth as the One Sun of all the world, and It, the One dynamic truth of life, is rediscovered as functioning through all the existence. Without It there is no existence and with this *Vibhu* everything comes to exist.

The Atman is one and the same before and after Its realisation; but when It groans under certain imaginary limitations—all due to the wrong estimations of the distorting mind—we superimpose upon It certain *Upadhis,* and when these false limitations are removed, It is realised and rediscovered as the One Self, ever dwelling everywhere.

नानोपाधिवशादेव
जातिवर्णाश्रमादयः ।
आत्मन्यारोपितास्तोये
रसवर्णादिभेदवत् ॥ ११ ॥

Nanopadhi-Vasadeva
Jati-Varna-Ashramadayah
Atmanyaropitah-Toye
Rasa-Varnadi Bhedavat 11

नानोपाधिवशात्—because of association with different conditionings *(Upadhis),* **एव**—only, **जातिवर्णाश्रमादयः**—caste, colour, position, etc., **आत्मानि**—upon the Atman, **आरोपिताः**—are superimposed, **तोये**—on water, **रसवर्णादिभेदवद्**—differences such as flavour, colour, etc.

11. Because of Its association with different conditionings (Upadhis) *such ideas as caste, colour, and position are superimposed upon the Atman, as flavour, colour, etc., are superimposed on water.*

Whether one is an advocate, a doctor or a porter, the inner

personality factors are the same. The education obtained, the apprenticeship undergone and the profession pursued are the only differences. They are all of *one* community, the community of man, but in their outer description and address, each differ from all others. Similarly life is the *same* everywhere, but the expression of life manifested through each one of them differs from all others. Whatever be the physical shape and form, name or caste, whatever be the emotional beauty or intellectual grasp exhibited, the Atman is the same everywhere in all creatures. There is no difference such as a young Atman, an old Atman, a Christian Atman, a Hindu Atman, a poor Atman, a rich Atman, etc. The Life-giving Truth in the varied existence of things is the One Reality, which equally thrills the entire panorama of things, persons and personalities. It remains unaffected by and unattached to all outword marks,—always a dispassionate observer of the endless drama of life.

The same "electric current" alone causes the fan to revolve, the refrigerator to cool its contents, the light to burn differently in the green, blue or red bulbs. Because of the difference in the manifestations of the energy, as it passes through the different equipments, ignorant people call them all by different names. Yet, the "electricity-wiseman" understands them all as depending upon the one energy.

Water itself is colourless although a given sample of it may be white, another yellow, and yet another sample red, each depending upon the nature of the extraneous matter it contains. In the same way, according to the type of *Vasanas* in each individual there seems to be difference between man and man. If we remove the contamination caused by the limitations *(Upadhis)* and understand and experience the one inner Spirit, which runs through all the individuals, we would realise that the difference we have been perceiving is merely a superimposition on that one glorious Reality without whose illumination life would be dark and impossible, a non-existent non-entity.

पञ्चीकृतमहाभूत-
सम्भवं कर्मसञ्चितम् ।

शरीरं सुखदुःखानां
भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

Pancheekrita-Mahabhoota-
Sambhavam Karmasanchitam
Sareeram Sukha-Dukhanam
Bhogayatanam Uchyate 12

पञ्चीकृतं–(the Five Elements) that have gone through the process of five-fold self-division and mutual combination, **महाभूतसंभवं**—made up of the Five Elements, **कर्मसञ्चितं**—determined by one's own past actions, **शरीरं**—the gross-body, **सुखदुःखानां**—for pleasure and pain, **भोगायतनं**—medium of experiencing, **उच्चते**–is said.

12. Determined for each individual by his own past actions, and made up of the Five Elements—that have gone through the process of "five-fold self-division and mutual combination" (Pancheekarana)*—are born the gross-body, the medium through which pleasure and pain are experienced, the tent-of-experiences.*

Now we come to analyse how the limiting factors or *Upadhis* emerge—the biographical story of the growth and development of the 'bodies' or layers of matter beneath which the Atman revels as luminous Consciousness. The three bodies are called the gross-body, the subtle-body and the causal-body.

The gross-body is composed of the Five Elements: Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. Observe the history of the body after death during its disintegration: soon after life has departed from it the heat contents pass out and the body becomes icy-cold (Fire): it also bloats up and emits gas (Air), and soon it decays in its own juicy contents (Water) and finally the bare physical structure decays to dust (Earth). The space occupied by the body is yielded back (Akasa).

In all creation the gross is derived from its subtler state and we all know that the 'cause' precedes the 'effect'. In the theory of *Pancheekarana* it is very elaborately pointed out how these Five Elements are evolved, how they intermingle, and how from the subtle *tanmatras,* the gross elements come about.

The Five Great Elements are Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. Before their grossifications they were each themselves, and in their pure natural states they are called the *Tanmatra.*[1] *Their grossifications takes place in five definite scientific stages:*

Stage. (i) They remain in their own individual pure state.

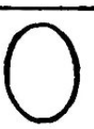
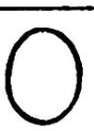
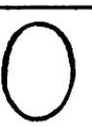
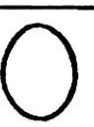
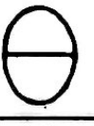
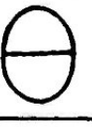
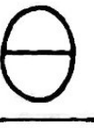
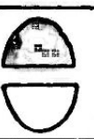
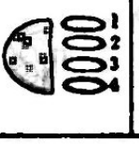
Stage (ii) Each *Tanmatra* of all the Five Elements shows a tendency to split into two equal halves.

Stage (iii) They split into two halves.

Stage (iv) At this stage half-*Tanmatra* of each element remains intact and the other half divides itself into four equal bits—each bit being one-eighth of the whole *Tanmatra.* Thus at this stage each *Tanmatra* (of stage I) has split into 5 segments: one half-bit and four one-eighth bits.

Stage (v) In this last stage, each half remains the same, and it combines with the four one eighths bits borrowed from all other four elements, thus gross.

The Process of Five-Fold Self-Division and Mutual Combination PANCHEEKARANA

Stages	Space. 1	Air. 2	Fire. 3	Water. 4	Earth. 5	Description.
(i)						Tanmatras; each in itself.
(ii)						Tendency to divide into two equal parts.
(iii)						The split complete.
(iv)						One half remaining intact, the others split into 4.
(v)						Each half married with 4-bits borrowed from all others.

1. *Tad-matram* = That alone.

Sky	= ½S	+ 1/8A	+ 1/8F	+ 1/8W	+ 1/8E.
Air	= ½A	+ 1/8S	+ 1/8F	+ 1/8W	+ 1/8E.
Fire	= ½F	+ 1/8S	+ 1/8A	+ 1/8W	+ 1/8E.
Water	= ½W	+ 1/8S	+ 1/8A	+ 1/8F	+ 1/8E.
Earth	= ½E	+ 1/8S	+ 1/8A	+ 1/8F	+ 1/8W.

The human body as already stated is the equipment with which we perceive things, and it is with the sense-organs available in the body that we derive our quota of pleasure and pain, which in their turn give us a measure of our success and failure in our individual lives.

The enjoyment of pleasure and pain *(Bhoga)* in this physical body, the hut-of-pleasure—the Hall-of-experience—is determined by our past *Karmas*. Thought by thought, action by action, we have demanded the present body and mental equipment. In fact, even while we are alive and acting here, now, we order the shape of the future life to be. Unless we conquer the bad *Vasanas* by right conduct, and practise systematically the righteous values of life, we do not come to live in an atmosphere in which our thoughts and actions are sufficiently divine and to be directly helpful for our own progressive evolution. It, therefore, now rests with us to make or mar our progress-to get a better life with plenty of opportunities in which we can slowly and steadily go forward and ultimately come to realise the Supreme Truth, or to get a wicked one in which we can dive ourselves into a greater gloom. With our own actions we give a blue-print to God ordering the exact shape of our destiny, and according to the specifications given, the body, the tent-of-experience, is built and handed over to each one of us by the All-merciful, Omnipotent, Divine Creator.

पञ्चप्राणमनोबुद्धि-
दशेन्द्रियसमन्वितम् ।
अपञ्चीकृतभूतोत्थं
सूक्ष्माङ्गं भोगसाधनम् ॥ १३ ॥

Panchaprana Mano Budhih
Dasa-Indriya-samanwitam
Apancheekrita-Bhoototham
Sukshmangam Bhogasadhanam 13

पञ्चप्राण —the Five Pranas (the manifestation of life in our body), **मनोबुद्धि** —mind and intellect, **दशेन्द्रिय**—the ten organs, **समन्वितं**—combined, **अपञ्चीकृतभूतोत्थ**—formed from the rudimentary elements, before their Pancheekarana, **सूक्ष्माङ्गं**—the subtle body, **भोगसाधनम्**—instrument of experience.

13. The five pranas, *the ten organs and the* manas *and the* buddhi, *formed from the rudimentary elements* (Tanmatras) *before their "five-fold division and mutual combination with one another"* (Pancheekarana) *and this is the subtle body, the instruments-of-experience (of the individual).*

In the lower wombs of the plant and the animal and the higher beings of the human and the celestial, there are vast differences. But behind all these wonderful differences, to any discriminative intellect capable of seeing things in their correct and true perspective, there is One pulsating force that plays the song of life through all these various equipments. If there be such a Oneness of existence everywhere, why is there a series of different experiences within myself, and why then, again, the various grades of life outside? Vedanta has not only theoretically dealt with this question, but a practical approach has been made to this problem. A very convincing answer, indeed is given to this deep doubt.

In this stanza the term *prana*[1] is to be correctly understood. It is "the manifestation of life in our body"—and the five *pranas* are the "five departments of life's activities", or categories of *prana* functioning departmentally in five ways.

They are: (1) *Prana* is that life-force which controls and regulates the various activities in our sense-organs. It is because of this dynamic energy that life is evident in sense-perceptions. (2) *Apana* is the excretory system in a healthy body: the capacity to reject the unnecessary and unwanted poisonous things from the body. (3) *Samana* expresses life's functions in the digestive system,

1. It is not the mechanical breathing 'in' and 'out'.

which makes the food ready for absorption by the body. (4) *Vyana* distributes the digested food with equity and justice, as the very word indicates, according to the need of the moment to each part. More food goes to our hands if we are cutting wood or breaking stones, and more for the legs if we are running or walking. (5) *Udana* is the capacity to rise up and peep into fresh fields of knowledge by which the existing wrong notions are removed by the newly acquired convictions and experiences, the capacity in us to evolve or devolve in our thoughts.

As the one Central Government holds its sway over the whole country from its seat in New Delhi, so too the one Self is the life that has Its sway over the whole body, and It functions from the heart-cave. The government of the body is conducted through the different *pranas* that are referred to above; any government will have its various ministers. One Life alone expresses itself in its five different moods, and each performs a different function in this physical body as each minister is in charge of a given department, and all of them are expressions of the one government in power.

Prana controls the perceptions at the different sense-organs. The spots on the physical body at which sense-perceptions seem to function are not in themselves the sense-organs. For instance, the two eyes are only instruments *(Golayas)* through which the "power of vision" beams forth, and the exact "power of vision" is in essence located in the mind-intellect-equipment. If the mind does not come in contact with the sense-organs, then no perception is possible. A man in deep thoughts or sleep does not see and recognise the person standing by his side, because, his "mind has not gone out[1] through the eyes to see the object" before him.

This Subtle Body—constituted of the five *pranas,* the ten sense-organs, the mind and the intellect—the instrument with which we experience pain and pleasure, is made out of the Five Great Elements, called the rudimentary elements *(Tanmatras),* before they

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[1]In Vedanta the theory of perception is that, consciousness riding over the mind flows through the sense-organs and reaches the object (*Ghata-Desa*) and takes the shape of the object. Then we have the knowledge (*Vritti Gyanam*) "this is the object" (*Ayam Ghatah*).

have gone through "the process of their five-fold subdivision and mutual combination" *(Pancheekarana)*. While the physical body explained in the last stanza is an establishment serving as the Hall of Experience, the Subtle Body formed out of the rudimentary elements *(Tanmatras)* is that by which, or through which the enjoyment of the objects in the outer world is rendered possible. The Subtle Body is constituted of the instruments-of-experience.

अनाद्यविद्यानिर्वाच्या
कारणोपाधिरुच्यते ।
उपाधित्रितंयादन्य-
मात्मानमवधारयेत् ॥ १४ ॥

Anadyavidya Anirvachya
Karano-Padhi-Ruchyate
Upadhi Tritayadanyam
Atmana-Mavadharayet 14

अनादि—beginningless, **अविद्या**—ignorance, **अनिर्वाच्या**—indescribable, **कारणोपाधिः**—Causal Body, **उच्यते**—is said, **उपाधित्रितयादन्यं**—other than the three conditioning bodies; **आत्मानं**—the *Atman*, **अवधारयेत्**—should understand.

14. Avidya *which is indescribable and beginningless is the Causal Body. Know for certain that the* Atman *is other than these three conditioning bodies.* (Upadhis).

In all cases of delusory superimpositions such as a ghost-vision in a post, the cause for the illusion is in the accidental non-apprehension of the Real, the misapprehensions start. Where truth is not known *(Avidya)*, when the reality of a thing is veiled *(Avarna)* from us, we cannot but misinterpret the reality through our own misdirected imaginations *(Vikshepa)*, which form the delusory projections *(Adhyasa)*. When the intellect is clouded with ignorance, the mind dances in agitation, painting for itself an exhaustive picture of dark despair.

When the spirit is not known due to the veiling layers of ignorance *(avidya)* the misapprehensions of the spirit as the various matter envelopments start. Identifying with these layers the delusory sense of individuality arises, and this ego suffers the pains and agonies of existence *(Samsar)*. The mere non-apprehension in case it is not creating any misapprehensions is a condition of relative joy.[1]

This *Avidya,* is the Causal Body, inasmuch as it is this ignorance of an Eternal spiritual perfection that has given us our gurgling desires in the intellect, thoughts in the mind, and actions through the body. The Subtle-body and Gross-body are the products of *Avidya* and therefore it is called the Causal Body.

Beginningless *Anadi*—This is a description of this mysterious *Avidya,* which the students of Vedanta, in their early days of study find it very difficult to accept and assimilate. Clear light is thrown into this concept by the modern revelations in science.

Time, according to modern scientists, is "the interval between events", and in our text-books of philosophical thoughts a more vivid definition is given which perhaps has a closer personal appeal: *Time is the interval between experiences.* To have an experience three factors are necessary: the *Experiencer* (Subject), the *Experienced* (Object) and the right relationship established and maintained between the subject and the object, called the *Experiencing*. Thus the mind-intellect instrument, the Experiencer, must have a world-of-objects, the Experienced, to establish the condition of Experiencing, to have the *first* experience.

At a single point, A, there is no distance to measure: from point A to any point B there is a distance. When the first experience ends, which is at the rise of a different experience, then alone can the concept of the *first* unit of time appear in our comprehension.

Even for the very first experience, where "time" is impossible, we need the equipments of the intellect, mind and body with a world-of-objects to perceive on, to feel for and to think upon. Thus, even before "time" was perceived the created world has come out ... and to perceive it the equipments of knowledge also must have been

1. The joyless joy-state of sleep is an example in us when we are in pure *Avidya,* in sheer non-apprehension of neither the Self nor the non-Self.

created. *Avidya* is the Causal Body for the subtle and gross envelopments, and, therefore, it cannot be qualified or measured by "time" which is its own by-products. My grandson complains: "Grandpapa, why did you not take me to the marriage of my Granny". *Avidya* is before time ... *Anadi*: timeless.

This *Avidya* is again qualified here by Shankara as indescribable. A thing that exists and which can be an object of our perception or feeling or thought alone can be framed in expressions and explained or described. But *Avidya* which is the cause for the instruments of perception, feeling and thought cannot be brought fully within our experience and hence the difficulty to explain it. Again, if a thing exists it can be explained: a non-existent thing also can be explained ... *Avidya* can neither be said as existent nor as non-existent (or both) and, therefore, it is inexplicable.

Lastly, in Vedanta the theme of discussion is *Vidya* and not *A-vidya*. The seeker has come to the teacher seeking Knowledge and not seeking to realise Ignorance. Therefore the *Sastra* says that the seekers need not try to understand and experience Ignorance...it is impossible: with a torch however fast we many run we will never be able to "see" darkness. Night flies before the vivid rays of the morn. Keeping a burning gas-light on his head one fool once walked the whole night through, trying to place that light at some place where there is darkness!...failed!!

The more we try to understand or know ignorance the more it moves off until we reach the True Knowledge.

पञ्चकोशादियोगेन
तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः ।
शुद्धात्मा नीलवस्त्रादि-
योगेन स्फटिको यथा ॥ १५ ॥

Panchakosadi Yogena
Tat-Tanmaya Eva Sthitah
Suddhatma Neelavastradi-
Yogena Spatiko Yatha 15

पञ्चकोशादि योगेन —by identification with the five-sheaths, **तत्**—That, **तन्मयः**—identical with that, **इव**—like, **स्थितः**—appears, **शुद्धात्मा** —the Pure Self, **नीलवस्त्रादियोगेन**—by association with blue garment, **स्फटिकः**—crystal, **यथा**—just as.

15. In its identification with the five-sheaths the Immaculate Atman appears to have borrowed their qualities upon Itself; as in the case of a crystal which appears to gather unto itself colour of its vicinity (blue cloth, etc.).

Here we are given an answer as to how the Perfect, the Immaculate Self happens to be contaminated by the impure and the imperfect. The Self is Ever-Pure and is the same everywhere, and is never contaminated by the finite objects in creation, nor by the different layers of matter, which are the products of our non-apprehension of the Truth. We wrongly seem to imagine, however, that this unchanging Supreme, because of Its association with the imperfect objects, conditioned by various limitations, gathers to Itself the stink of the "five-sheaths",[1] when Life is *expressed* through the mind and the sense-organs. The venom of the Superimposed serpent cannot poison the rope, its substratum: the blood on the lips of the Ghost can never leave any stain upon the innocent post.

A clear glass-tumbler seems to take up the colour of the table-cloth on which it happens to stand. Similarly, because of the seeming identification and association of the Pure Self with the five-sheaths as It expresses Itself in and through them, we mistakenly identify the five-sheaths as our own true nature.

The five-sheaths are *(a)* the gross physical structure, the anatomical *(Annamaya), (b)* the vital-air sheath, the physiological *(Pranamaya), (c)* the mental sheath, the psychological *(Manomaya), (d)* the intellectual sheath *(Vijnanamaya),* and *(e)* the Bliss sheath *(Anandamaya).*

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1. The personality in man is conveniently analysed into five layers on the basis of their distinct functions and these are called as the *Pancha-Kosas*: the five-sheaths. They are: *Annamaya Kosa* (Food Sheath); *Pranamaya Kosa* (Vital-Air Sheath); *Manomaya Kosa* (Mental Sheath); *Vijnanamaya Kosa* (Intellectual Sheath) and *Anandamaya Kosa (Bliss Sheath).*

वपुस्तुषादिभिः कोशै-
र्युक्तं युक्त्यावघातनः ।
आत्मानमन्तरं शुद्धं
विविच्यात्तण्डुलं यथा ॥ १६ ॥

Vapus Tushadibhih Kosaih
Yuktam Yuktya Avaghatatah
Atmana-Mantaram Suddham
Vivichyat Tandulam Yatha 16

वपुः—the form, **तुषादिभिः**—with husk, etc., **कोशैः**—with sheaths, **युक्तं**—covered, **युक्त्या**—by logical thinking, **अवघाततः**—by thrashing rice in a mortar, **आत्मानं**—the Self, **अन्तरं**—within, **शुद्धं**—pure, **विविच्यात्**—should separate, **तण्डुलं**—rice, **यथा**—just as.

16. Through discriminative self-analysis and logical thinking one should separate the Pure self within from the sheaths as one separates the rice from the husk, bran, etc., that are covering it.

How then are we to visualise the glory and greatness of this Supreme Truth that is All-pervading, the Self in us? How to separate Spirit from Matter and realise the pure Spirit?

Just as rice is obtained by removing the husk, bran, etc., from the paddy, so too, by the discriminating faculty in us which distinguishes the real from the unreal, removing of the various impurities superimposed by us upon the Self, and getting beneath the sheaths of the dark spiritual ignorance *(Avidya)* which dims the light of the Real Self, we must realise It singularly alone in Its Pure and uncontaminated state.

Thus, by the art of negation of the physical and mental equipments in us, and also by the removal of the dusty dirt that has been let in to rest on That Immortal, the Glory of the total existence in the manifold creation, the *Atman,* is to be realised as the Pure Consciousness. When an earnest seeker subjectively experiences this Truth he becomes detached from the various sheaths, which are his personality layers. He realises that the Soul is different from those layers, and in the constant process of detachment from them he attains the Infinite Knowledge and the Absolute Bliss: he rediscovers his spiritual status as the Eternal Self.

सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा
न सर्वत्रावभासते ।
बुद्धावेवावभासते
स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् ॥ १७ ॥

Sada Sarvagato-Pyatma
Na Sarvatra-Avabhasathe
Buddhaveva-Avabhaseta
Swacheshu Pratibimbavat 17

सदा—always, **सर्वगतः**—All-pervading, **अपि**—although, **आत्मा**—the Self, **न**—not, **सर्वत्र**—everywhere, **अवभासते**—shines, **बुद्धौ**—in the intellect, **एव**—only, **अवभासते**—manifests, **स्वच्छेषु**—in the transparent surface, **प्रतिबिम्बवत्**—just as the reflection.

17. The Atman *does not shine in everything although He is All-pervading. He is manifest only in the inner equipment, the intellect* (Buddhi): *just as the reflection in a clean mirror.*

The *Atman* being Infinite is by Its very nature All-pervading. Although It is available in the cognition of all objects, in the Pure

intellect *(Buddhi)* alone can we come to realise the Self *(Atma-tattva)* in all Its essential splendour, just as in a clear polished mirror alone are we able to see our reflections distinctly, although, according to the principles of reflection our faces are reflected[1] everywhere on all objects.

Let us again take the example of our own Government. It functions from New Delhi, but it sounds odd if we really mean that the Government is in New Delhi alone and not in the other parts of India. The Government may have its headquarters up in the North, but even in a little home away in the South, the overall hold and grace of the Government falls equally. On every inch of the country it has its sway. Its laws are applicable throughout the length and breadth of the land. Yet, to meet the Government one must go to New Delhi. So too, although the Lord, the Supreme Brahman, who is the substratum for all this plurality is *within* us, as well as *without* us, it is only in the subtle intellect *(Buddhi),* purified and steadied that it is to be clearly seen fully "reflected".

The body is gross, the mind is agitated over one thing or another, and hence it is in the "subtle intellect," that one can learn by practice to be calm and steady. In that serene quietitude of a settled and pure mind the effulgent Self is recognised, just as we can see quite easily and clearly our own image only in a clean mirror held steady.

देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धि-
प्रकृतिभ्यो विलक्षणम्।
तद्वृत्तिसाक्षिणं विद्या-
दात्मानं राजवत्सदा ॥ १८ ॥

[1] According to Physics light falling on the object gets reflected and these reflected light-rays again get reflected at the reflecting surface; and when they fall on our retina we see the reflection. This process goes on even on a granite rough wall-surface but we don't see our reflection there.

Dehendriya-Mano-Buddhi-
Prakritibhyo Vilakshanam
Tadvritti Sakshinam Vidyad-
Atmanam Rajavat-Sada 18

देह—body, **इन्द्रिय**—senses, **मनस्**—mind, **बुद्धिः**—intellect, **प्रकृतिभ्यः**—from all this matter *(Prakriti)*, **विलक्षणं**—distinct, **तद्वृत्तिसाक्षिणं**—witness of their functions, **विद्यात्**—know, **आत्मानं**—the Self, **राजवत्**—like a King, **सदा**—always.

18. One should understand that the Atman *is always like the King, distinct from the body, senses, mind and intellect, all of which constitute the matter* (Prakriti); *and is the witness of their functions.*

The Pure Intelligence, the All-pervading Brahman is to be understood as distinct from, and beyond the physical equipments constituted of the body, mind and intellect, for, it is this Supreme Illuminator who illumines the subtle workings of the intellect, the grosser thoughts of the mind and the still grosser physical movements. In spite of all this seemingly interested association—illumination—It is ever a mere 'witness' and never a participant. An illuminator is always separate from the objects illumined; the subject of experience cannot be the same as the objects of the same experience.

A king is not a participant in the drama and dance in his Darbar-hall. He is only a witness, and like him the *Atman* is a witness of the drama-of-life going on in this body and in the world outside—the microcosmic and the macrocosmic existence.

Subjectively analysed, Self is a *witness* of the play of matter. The ideas of good and bad, the knowledge of right and wrong, the feeling of sorrow and joy, and the appreciation of beauty and ugliness, our sense of duty and neglect, etc., and the actions of the physical body, are all aspects of our inner and outer subjective life. These experiences, constituted of the knowledge which we know and also of those which we do not know,—*i.e.*, the positive experience of a thing and the nothingness of what we do not know—the *Bhava* and the *Abhava*—are all illumined for us, by that One Awareness, the Pure Consciousness. It stands aloof and does not identify Itself with

what is happening in the entire cosmic order, nor does It identify Itself with what is happening within ourselves in the different layers of matter. It is *not* the sharer of the experience; It is only an observer like the King in his Darbar-hall, a non-partisan in all affairs, disinterested in all happenings and yet All-powerful *(Rajavat)*.

व्यापृतेष्विन्द्रियेष्वात्मा
व्यापारीवाविवेकिनाम् ।
दृश्यतेऽभ्रेषु धावत्सु
धावन्निव यथा शशी ॥ १९ ॥

Vyapriteshu-Indriyeshu-Atma
Vyapareeva-Avivekinam
Drisyate-Abhreshu Dhavatsu
Dhavanniva Yatha Sasi 19

व्यापृतेषु—while functioning, **इन्द्रियेषु**—the sense-organs, **आत्मा**—the Self, **व्यापारी**—active, **इव**—like, **अविवेकिनाम्**—for non-discriminating people, **दृश्यते**—appears, **अभ्रेषु**—the clouds, **धावत्सु**—when moving, **धावन्**—to be running, **इव**—like, **यथा**—just as, **शशी**—the moon.

19. The moon appears to be running when the clouds move in the sky. Likewise to the non-discriminating person the Atman *appears to be active when It is observed through the functions of the sense-organs.*

When the Imperishable Self sheds its illumination and expresses Itself in the life of the perishable individual, it looks as though the Self Itself is acting. The actions and movements are of the sense-organs *(Indriyas)*, and are not of the Self, the Life Spark in us, which is the sole nourisher of all life. It gives the organs their capacities for such manifestations.

The steam in the engine supplies the power for the locomotive to pull the train of carriages. It has neither a favour for nor any prejudice against anybody travelling in the attached compartments.

The steam has no particular destination to reach. Similarly, the Supreme Atman, when It expresses Itself through the body, mind and intellect, the Self *seems* to act; but actually the Self participates in none of the activities of the sheaths; It has nothing to gain through any such activities.

So, whatever thoughts and actions spark up within and fly past a given individual, the Self alone is the substratum for them all, and it is in the Light of the Self that they are recognised and experienced. There would be absolutely no manifestation or existence of life, either in the individual, or in the cosmic order, without the Omnipotence of this Supreme, available ever so readily to sustain them all.

A person who lacks in his powers of discrimination *(Aviveki)* does not perceive the truth playing so evidently beneath the play of manifested life, but mistakes the activity of the non-self as that of the Self, even though perceptibly It is only an unbiased witness and detached observer.

In almost everyone of the stanzas we are given a comparison without which the mighty and glorious existence of the 'real' Self cannot be indicated as the Immaculate, ever-uncontaminated by the frolics of the 'unreal'. Here, the illustration is that of the moon, which seems, to the childish folk, as moving because of the clouds that pass in front of it. In a train journey it looks as though the trees and hillocks of the country-side are moving fast, while actually the train indeed is that is moving. Through a moving medium even a motionless steady object looks *as though* moving. The objects observed gather to themselves the properties of the medium through which we observe.

The illustration employed here has a very deep significance to those who can clearly meditate upon it. The entire import of the illustration can strike us down with a joyful amazement when we visualise the picture clearly. Imagine an observer looking up at the moon through the marching clouds in the sky. The observer is standing maximum 6 ft. from the surface of the vast Earth, observing the Moon, that glows some thousands of miles away, through clouds that are a couple of miles away from the observer.

And yet, the observer cries "the cloud has covered the moon"

or "the moon is running". Similarly the Infinite Self, when viewed through the restlessness of the body, mind and intellect, *looks* as though the Self is agitated and active.

If there be the sufficient mental poise and the required scientific observation of the phenomena of life the intelligent student can easily recognise that all agitations belong, in fact, to the matter-layers in us, and the Self is never involved in them. The moon *seems* to be moving, because we look at it through a moving medium.

We recognise life as dynamic because we observe life only through the vehicles of its expressions. Looking at a living creature, through its physical, mental and intellectual activities, we say Life is dynamic, active, ever-pulsating. In fact Life as such is not active ...the vehicles thrilled by life act and these actions are superimposed upon the Self, and in this confused observation it *seems* as though the Self is active.

When the mind is agitated, the Self *seems* to be agitated. We do not realise that the Self has no such agitations, that It is silent and steady, firm and dispassionate and that these eruptions are only on the surface of the mind. Thus, upon the glorious Self are wrongly superimposed the functions of the different layers of matter. To experience the Self without the intervention of the matter sheaths is to realise Its Infinitude and full Divinity.

आत्मचैतन्यमाश्रित्य
देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः ।
स्वक्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्ते
सूर्यलोकं यथा जनाः ॥ २० ॥

Atmachaitanyam-Aasritya
Dehe-Indriya-Mano-Dhiyah
Swa-Kriyartheshu Vartante
Suryalokam Yatha Janah 20

आत्मचैतन्यं—vitality of Consciousness, **आश्रित्य**—depending upon, **देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः**—body, senses, mind and intellect,

स्वक्रियार्थेषु —in their respective activities, **वर्तन्ते**—engage, **सूर्यलोकं**—light of the Sun, **यथा**—just as, **जना:**—people.

20. Depending upon the energy of vitality of Consciousness (Atma Chaitanya) *the body, senses, mind and intellect engage themselves in their respective activities, just as men work depending upon the light of the Sun.*

Every one of the equipments—body, mind and intellect—functions in its own definite sphere, and each one of it depends entirely upon that Power *(Atma Chaitanya)* which by its mere Presence kindles Life in matter and makes it look as though sentient.

The power of electricity is one, but its fields of operation are different. Without electricity even if we have all the bulbs and switches in their proper places, we do not get any manifestations. Likewise, without the enlivening *Atman,* no activity is possible in this world, and all the objects of creation would then be, without Its grace, a dead weight of matter hanging heavily around like stone—inert, dark and devoid of any symptom of life and hope. It is That which makes up the life in all, at once dynamic, gay, energetic and beaming with attraction, although in Itself It is not affected by the things and happenings of life, which It illumines in Its shining presence-divine.

The illustration here is from the various activities that start with the rising of the Sun in the East. Whatever be the thoughts and actions of an individual who faces the day, the Sun which illumines the earth is not affected by the happiness or sorrow of those who are here in this world. It simply illumines whatever part of the globe comes before Its power of illumination. So too, at the touch of the illumining glory of the Self *(Atma Chaitanya),* the outer world of activities is vitalised. The Self never gets mixed up with anything which It vitalises. Whatever be the situation which the Sun is illumining, some bleeding war or some boiling tar, the sun neither gets red nor black—the sunlight need never get boiled up with the prevailing sense of hate or heat.

देहेन्द्रियगुणान्कर्मा-
ण्यमले सच्चिदात्मनि ।
अध्यस्यन्त्यविवेकेन
गगने नीलतादिवत् ॥ २१ ॥

Dehendriya-Gunan-Karmani-
Amale Sachchidatmani
Adhyasyanti-Avivekena
Gagane Neelatadivat 21

देहेन्द्रियगुणान्—Qualities of the body and senses, **कर्माणि**—actions, **अमले**—pure, **सच्चिदात्मनि**—on the *Atman*, the Absolute-Existence-Knowledge, **अध्यस्यन्ति**—superimpose, **अविवेकेन**—by lack of discrimination, **गगने**—in the sky, **नीलतादिवत्**—blue colour and the like.

21. Fools, because they lack in their powers of discrimination superimpose on the Atman, *the Absolute-Existence-Knowledge* (Sat-Chit), *all the varied functions of the body and the senses, just as they attribute blue colour and the like to the sky.*

Because they lack in their powers of right discrimination, the qualities of the body-mind-intellect, the limitations of the physical and subtle body—are superimposed by the ignorant on the Pure Self. Thereafter the deluded mistake this Real Self to be One possessing all the imperfections of the superimposed equipments. This non-discrimination *(Aviveka)* is like the misconception which makes children believe that the sky is blue when actually it has no colour.

Not only the blueness but the concavity of the sky, murkiness, mistry looks, dusty conditions, are all often considered as conditions of the sky. In fact, space appears as having these qualities but space as such has none of them.

An object is not affected by the traits superimposed upon it, and here, when we superimpose certain characteristics of the body and mind on the Self-effulgent Being, the Truth itself is not affected by such misconceived notions and attributes. The blueness perceived is

the experience of our limited vision when it looks at the endless summer sky.

अज्ञानान्मानसोपाधेः
कर्तृत्वादीनि चात्मनि ।
कल्प्यन्तेऽम्बुगते चन्द्रे
चलनादि यथाम्भसः ॥ २२ ॥

Agyanat-Manaso-Upadheh
Kartritvadeeni Chatmani
Kalpyante-Ambugate-Chandre
Chalandi Yatha-Ambhasah 22

अज्ञानात्—through ignorance, **मानसोपाधेः**—of the mind which is a *Upadhi*, **कर्तृत्वादीनि**—agency of action, etc., **च**—and, **आत्मनि**—on the Self, **कल्प्यन्ते**—attribute, **अम्बुगते**—which is reflected in the water, **चन्द्रे**—in the moon, **चलनादि**—tremblings, etc., **यथा**—just as, **अम्भसः**—of the water.

22. The tremblings that belong to the waters are attributed through ignorance to the reflected moon dancing on it: likewise agency of action, of enjoyment and of other limitations (which really belong to the mind) are delusively understood as the nature of the Self (Atman).

The ideas 'I am the enjoyer', 'I am the doer', are of the intellect. These different ideas, such as 'I am this...I am...etc.', arise in the mind only when we are in the midst of the activities of the work-a-day-world and of the dream-world; for, when we are in deep-sleep we do not have any such ideas. It is only when the mind is available for perception and cognition that we come to know of the things cognised. As long as we identify ourselves with the mind, so long alone can we claim to have the dual-experiences in these planes of existence, but when once we have withdrawn ourselves from the mental plane and are in a state of Pure Consciousness *(Samadhi),* we realise that all the thoughts and emotions, and activities of the intellect, mind and body are *not* in the Self, nor are they *of* the Self.

The delusory reflection of the Consciousness in the mental-pool which agitates with the panting egoistic ideas of 'I am the doer', 'I am the enjoyer', etc., cease when there are no more any thought eruptions therein.

The example here is of an image of the moon reflected in a bucket of water which *seems* to shiver when the water surface is disturbed. When the water calms down and becomes steady, we do not see the shattered moon in the bucket-of-water re-assembling to form one whole. Similarly, when one has purified one's mind and has consolidated its strength and has reconstructed it to be firm and steady by narrowing down its various unholy, unhelpful and selfish thoughts, the glory of the Self gets automatically reflected in all its beauty within oneself—unshaken by the dualities around and the consequent agitations.

रागेच्छासुखदुःखादि
बुद्धौ सत्यां प्रवर्तते।
सुषुप्तौ नास्ति तन्नाशे
तस्माद्बुद्धेस्तु नात्मनः ॥२३॥

Rage-Chha-Sukha-Dukhadi
Buddhow Satyam Pravartate
Sushuptow Nasti Tannase
Tasmad Buddhe-Sthu Na-Atmanah 23

रागः—Attachment, **इच्छा**—desire, **सुख**—pleasure, **दुःखादि**—pain, etc., **बुद्धौ सत्यां**—when mind or intellect functions, **प्रवर्तते**—are perceived, **सुषुप्तौ**—in deep-sleep, **न**—not, **अस्ति**—is, **तन्नाशे**—at the destruction of it (mind), **तस्मात्**—therefore, **बुद्धेः**—of the mind, **तु**—only, **न**—not, **आत्मनः**—of the *Atman*.

23. Attachment, desire, pleasure, pain, etc., are perceived to exist so long as Buddhi *or mind functions. They are not perceived in deep sleep when the mind ceases to exist. Therefore they belong to the mind alone, and not to the* Atman.

There is no place for ignorance in the blissful existence of the Self which is Omniscient and Omnipresent. How can there be darkness before light, and how can the passions that arise in the mind come to stay with the *Atman*? It is the *Avidya* of the individual—his desire for pleasure and his attachment to the fruits of his actions—that deludes him to the bondage of *Samsara*.

A pure mind leads one to greater glory and happiness, and ultimately to liberation through the final experience of the true Knowledge, whilst the same mind drags the individual down to lower births when it groans in *Ajnana*. Therefore, if we deal suitably with the turbulent mind, and quieten its riotous activities, the Self is revealed in Its infinite glory with no blemish of the *Jeevattwam* in him,—and remember, attachment, desire, etc., are of the mind and *not* of the *Atman*.

So long as we are functioning through our mind, we are under the tyranny of attachment, desire, pleasure, pains, etc. But in deep-sleep when temporarily our minds are not effective in ourselves all these tyrannies are at an end. When I look through a pair of green goggles everything looks green. When I look at things with my naked eye there is no green colour. Therefore the greenness is due to the glasses.

प्रकाशोऽर्कस्य तोयस्य
शैत्यमग्नेर्यथोष्णता ।
स्वभावः सच्चिदानंद-
नित्यनिर्मलतात्मनः ॥ २४ ॥

Prakasa Arkasya Toyasya
Saitya-Magneh-Yatho-Shnata
Swabhawah Sat-Chit-Ananda
Nitya-Nirmalata-Atmanah 24

प्रकाशः—luminosity, **अर्कस्य**—of the Sun; **तोयस्य**—for water, **शैत्यं**—coolness, **अग्नेः**—for fire, **यथा**—just as, **उष्णता**—heat, **स्वभावः**—nature, **सत्**—Reality, **चित्**—Consciousness, **आनन्द**—Bliss, **नित्य**—Eternity, **निर्मलता**—Purity, **आत्मनः**—of the *Atman*.

24. Just as luminosity is the nature of the Sun, coolness of water, and heat of fire, so too the nature of the Atman *is Eternity, Purity, Reality, Consciousness and Bliss.*

Whether it is the human personality or the plant specimen or animal entity, no one wants to die or suffer any agony and pain. Instead, there is a positive effort at all times for the acquisition of knowledge and the enjoyment of pleasure and for the self-preservation of the individuality.

Nothing, can remain away from its essential—nature *Dharma* ...there cannot be cool fire or a dark sun. Every object must express its own essential nature.

The sun is luminosity itself which it shows out. The heat of the fire is well known, and no one has come across a cold ball of fire. Similarly, if at all *Atman* is to be defined in terms of its nature we can only say that It is that which is Eternal *(Nitya),* Ever-pure *(Nirmala)* and Existence-Knowledge-Bliss *(Sat-Chit-Anand).*

आत्मनः सच्चिदंशश्च
बुद्धेर्वृत्तिरिति द्वयम् ।
संयोज्य चाविवेकेन
जानामीति प्रवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

Atmanah Sat-Chid-Amsas-Cha
Budheh Vritti-Riti Dwayam
Samyojya-Cha-Avivekena
Janamiti Pravartate 25

आत्मनः—of the self, **सच्चिदंशः**—the Existence-Knowledge-aspect, **च**—and, **बुद्धेः**—of the intellect, **वृत्तिः**—the thought wave, **इति**—thus, **द्वयं**—the two, **संयोज्य**—blending, **च**—and, **अविवेकेन** through indiscrimination, **जानामि**—I know, **इति**—thus, **प्रवर्तते**—functions.

25. By the indiscriminate blending of the two—the Existence-

Knowledge-aspect of the Self and the thought-wave of the intellect—there arises the notion of "I know".

The *Atman* is self-effulgent, and mind is inert matter. Without the power of Illumination in Consciousness the mind would be inert and powerless to feel—for, without this awareness within we will not be *conscious* of our own thoughts. At the same time a marriage between these two contradictory things is impossible, and, therefore, any alliance between the two is only at best a delusory superimposition.

The experience *'I know'* is thus produced only when a feeling or thought stands bathed in the Light of Consciousness. Each thought is considered as a wave-like disturbance in the mental-stuff. When these "waves" of thoughts arise in us they are illumined by our awareness...when, we cry 'I know', 'I understand', 'I feel', etc.

The sun rises and then the waves of the sea are seen and experienced. The sun-light falls on all surfaces equally. Like a silken veil it lies on every surface and when the waves rise the light-veil yields, embracing the waves on all sides, illumining it. So too in our inner bosom the light-of-consciousness illumines the height, breadth, and depth of each thought.

The mind-intellect equipment stands ever exposed to the Eternal Self and its light of awareness. When through the sense-organs the stimuli from external world reach the bosom, the mind with help of the knowledge, acquired by it in the past, produces its responses, which in their turn are expressed in the actions. Life is an *'unbroken series of experiences'*, and therefore, the individual is called upon to respond to it constantly. To know the happenings and to know how to meet them is the contents and purpose of man's intellectual life.

Self is Knowledge Absolute. It is Knowledge Itself. In it there is nothing else that is to be known. It is the only One Subject without any object-to-be-known. As such in Itself, It has nothing to know. Yet, we are experiencing the intellectual life of constantly knowing. How? This is the subject explained in this stanza.

It is the theory in Vedanta that the knowledge of things is gained not in the direct light of Consciousness, but it is in "the beam of

Consciousness reflected in the mind''. I will explain it with the help of an illustration.

Suppose there is a store room in your house which is ever in darkness. One day you realised that the room was extremely well illumined; Why? There was a bucket of water on the verandah where the sun light got reflected and threw a pool of light on the dark wall of the room. If your little son were to come at that time to play with the bucket of water the illumination in the dark room will disappear; for, when the reflecting-medium is disturbed the reflected-light is splashed about, and the room is again in the dark until the reflection rehabilitates itself on the wall.

So too the Self never illumines the objects directly, but the Light of Consciousness reflected on our intellect throws out a beam of *reflected* Consciousness which illumines the objects and gives us the experience *'I know'*. That is why even a man of intelligence, when vexed with some worry, cannot think properly or understand easily. His power of understanding or thinking is clouded when the mind is disturbed.

Thus, when the mental pool rises in thought-waves the light of the Self illumines them. Thoughts dressed in Consciousness is the clear experience *'I know'*. Feelings and ideas in our bosom glittering in Consciousness are our knowledge-of-things.

Anger, knowledge, etc., are all characteristics of the mind and they are thus attributed to the *Atman* due to lack of discrimination. The nature of the *Atman,* in reality, is *Sat-Chit-Ananda,* and this Eternal Self does not undergo any change even when the individual experiences anger, pain, pleasure, etc., in his mind.

आत्मनो विक्रिया नास्ति-
बुद्धेर्बोधो न जात्विति।
जीवः सर्वमलं ज्ञात्वा
ज्ञाता द्रष्टेति मुह्यति॥ २६॥

Atmano Vikriya Na-Asti
Buddheh-Bodho Na Jatwiti

Jivah Sarvam-Alam Gnyattwa
Gnyata Drishteti Muhyati 26

आत्मनः—for the Self, **विक्रिया**—action, **न**—not, **अस्ति**—is, **बुद्धेः**—for the intellect, **बोधः**—capacity to experience (Intelligence), **न**—not, **जातु**—at all, **इति**—thus, **जीवः**—the individuality, **सर्वम्**—everything, **अलं**—enough, **ज्ञात्वा**—knowing, **ज्ञाता**—the knower, **द्रष्टा**—the seer, **इति**—thus, **मुह्यति**—deludes.

26. Atman never does anything and the intellect of its own accord has no capacity to experience 'I know'. *But the individuality in us delusorily thinks he is himself the seer and the knower.*

Human intellect by itself is not endowed with the powers of feeling, thinking, willing or wishing, because it is a product of matter which is inert and insentient. A bulb in itself has no light without it being wedded to the electric current.

Atman is Knowledge itself and It is not affected by the mental-thoughts and physical actions. The individuality *(Jiva),* which is a reflection of the Pure Consciousness in the mind, in its ignorance *(Avidya)* of its true nature, falsely identifies itself with the body-mind-intellect equipment, and it comes to superimpose the characteristics of the true Self on these insentient matter-envelopments. In this way the delusion that one is a seer, knower, etc., arises in the ego, all because of a false notion in himself.

The substratum for all these changing phenomena is that changeless Atman. This world of plurality with different names and forms seem to rise and fall like waves on the ocean. It is an illusion experienced upon that substratum *(Adhishtana)* painted by the fancy of the confused ego. Just as the waves are *in* and *of* the ocean only, and they do not stand even for a moment, apart from the oceanic waters, so also the entire waves of creation is *in* and *of* that Absolute Supreme, and have no separate existence in themselves. This supreme Being is the Atman who stands ever unaffected in the least by the changes caused in the arena of time, space and casuality.

The illuminating Consciousness because of which there is an awareness of the various objects and activities of the inner mind is

that Supreme Reality. Thus, though waves after waves of sorrow, dejection, despair, joy, success, anger, jealousy or passion may come in the mind, he who knows the "knower" of these waves is not affected by them. Why should the sun dim because of the tragedies he is illumining, or glow the brighter where he is illumining a joyous scene? *"The Self I am ... I am illumining my mental conditions. I know I am happy or unhappy ... but these are the mental waves that I am illumining. I am the Light of Consciousness. None of the conditions of the mind is me"* ... this is the constant wisdom of the wise man.

रज्जुसर्पवदात्मानं जीवो
ज्ञात्वा भयं वहेत् ।
नाहं जीवः परात्मेति
ज्ञातश्चेन्निर्भयो भवेत् ॥ २७ ॥

Rajju-Sarpavad-Atmanam Jivo
Gnyattwa Bhayam Vahet
Naham Jivah Paratmeti
Gnyatas-Chet Nirbhayo Bhavet 27

रज्जुसर्पवत्—like a serpent in a rope, **आत्मानं**—oneself, **जीवः**—the ego, **ज्ञात्वा**—considering, **भयं**—fear, **वहेत्**—carries (or) is overcome, **न**—not, **अहं**—I, **जीवः**—the individuality or the ego, **परात्मा**—the Supreme Self, **इति**—thus, **ज्ञातः**—having under- stood, **चेत्**—if, **निर्भयः**—fearless, **भवेत्**—can be.

27. Just as the person who regards a rope as a snake is overcome by fear, so also one considering oneself as the ego (Jiva) *is overcome by fear. The ego-centric individuality in us regains fearlessness by realising that It is not a* Jiva *but is Itself the Supreme Soul.*

The super-imposition of a snake-vision on a rope takes place only when the existence of the rope is *not* perceived. Once a misapprehension starts, it multiplies itself, in its own imaginations, into a thousand baseless notions, and the individual under his own delusions suffers the consequences thereof, just as the vision of the

snake gives us perceptions of the details of the snake, the pain of its bite, the fear of the death that will be caused by the snake-on-the-rope.

In the non-apprehension of the Self, the misapprehension of the gross physical body, mind, etc., are perceived as real, and in this misunderstanding the confused ego is born to suffer its own illusory sorrows. We are not the 'limited individuality' as we take ourselves to be. There is a limitless region of experience beyond what is known at present, and this is shut out from us because of our self-centered existence. When the realisation of the true nature of the Self comes to one—even as mere theoretical knowledge—he, who was till then in a perpetual state of fear and sorrow, seems to wake up from his own limited existence and re-discovers himself to be the Blissful Self which is All-pervading and Eternal.

If and when thereafter there is an outward cognition of any experience, such a Mahatman of Self-realisation cannot but see the same matter equipments of experiences, which were before his own, singing the Eternal Song of Life.

आत्मावभासयत्येको
बुद्ध्यादीनीन्द्रियाण्यपि ।
दीपो घटादिवत्स्वात्मा
जडैस्तैर्नावभास्यते ॥ २८ ॥

Atma Avahbasayatyeko
Buddhyadeen-Indriyanyapi
Deepo Ghatadivat-Swa-Atma
Jadai-Stir-Na-Avabhasyate 28

आत्मा—the Self, **अवभासयति**—illumines, **एकः**—single, **बुद्ध्यादीनि**—intellect, etc., **इन्द्रियाणि**—sense-organs, **अपि**—also, **दीपः**—lamp, **घटादिवत्**—like the pots, etc., **स्वात्मा**—itself, **जडैः**—inert, **तैः**—by themselves, **न**—not, **अवभास्यते**—illumined.

28. Just as a lamp illumines a jar or a pot, so also the Atman illumines the mind, and the sense organs, etc. These material-objects by themselves cannot illumine themselves because they are inert.

The street lamp is a silent, unperturbed witness of all that happens under its light. Whether it is a marriage procession or a funeral march, the light, unmoved by the feelings of joy or sorrow, sheds its glow on all those that come under it.

The postman is unconcerned with the nature and contents of the communication he delivers to the addressee.

In fact, we ourselves are unconcerned with the different experiences of a co-passenger when we get into a train or bus, and we never consider his loss or gain as our own...although we may sympathise with his lot and help him, the sorrow is only "illumined" by us.

The Self in us is the One illuminating factor—the Pure Awareness which alone illumines both the good and the bad in us at all times. "What mind does not comprehend, but what makes the mind cognise, know that to be Brahman and not what people worship,"[1] says the Upanishad the one power on account of which the physical activities and the mental yearnings and intellectual throbbings become vivid and living for us. The matter combinations may vary in their endless variety, in their strength, vitality, and energy, but the one Spirit, which through all these different manifestations of matter does not change at all, is the One and only glory which gives the glitter of a show to the entire *'jagat'*—a lively show indeed!

स्वबोधे नान्यबोधेच्छा
बोधरूपतयात्मनः ।
न दीपस्यान्यदीपेच्छा
यथा स्वात्मप्रकाशने ॥ २९ ॥

Swa-Bodhe Na-Annya Bodhe-Iccha
Bodha-Roopataya—Atmanah

1. Refer Swamiji's Discourses on KENOPANISHAD, (1-5)

Na Deepasya-Annya-Deepe-Iccha
Yatha Swa-Atma-Prakasane 29

स्वबोधे—to know itself, न—not, अन्यबोधेच्छा—need for other knowledge, बोधरूपतया—because, Its form is knowledge itself, आत्मन: —one's own, न—not, दीपस्य—for a lamp, अन्यदीपेच्छा —need for another lamp, यथा—just as, स्वात्मप्रकाशने—to illumine itself.

29. A lighted-lamp does not need another lamp to illumine its light. So too, Atman which is Knowledge itself needs no other knowledge to know it.

Light is necessary to see the furniture in the dark room of a house, but to see the very light which illumines the furniture do we require any other light?

We do not call for the aid of any other light to see the very sun that illumines all the objects in the world, because the sun itself is illumination complete. To understand, realise and experience the Self, the *Illuminating light in all our experiences,* in fact, in all beings at all times, no other "light" is necessary, because this Self alone is the Real, and this Self alone lights up the knowledge of the entire creation known and unknown. This Self is the all-awaring Consciousness Absolute.

If we remove the furniture, etc., from the presence of the light, the light does not cease to exist. Similarly, even if all the objects in this world—if all our experiences in the waking, dream and deep-sleep states—have ended, even then, the Awareness shall keep on shining as ever before, because the Atman is Eternal and Self-effulgent. To know this Source of all Light no other light is necessary.

The outer world of objects is illumined as long as I am extrovert. The moment I turn inward and my attention is introvert, I realise that *That* light alone is the Real One which illumines the entire experiences everywhere, not only in my own bosom but in the entire world of beings. Whatever be the technique which we adopt, we are

bound to realise this Reality if we faithfully follow the path laid down by the learned Sages and experienced Seers.

The intellect cannot comprehend the One Homogeneous whole, because 'It' is not an object-of-cognition. With a telescope I cannot see myself. I can only see other objects in front of me and round about me. Similarly, so long as the intellect is there, it is indeed very useful to discriminate, to reason out, to analyse, and to understand the objects and happenings in a field, other than the intellect itself. Now, when we try to understand the Transcendental Truth with that limited intellect in an objective way, the intellect is only trying to achieve the impossible and the impracticable as the Self is the "subject" that illumines the very intellect itself.

The grosss body is an object of experience. The subtle mind is something separate from and subtler than this gross equipment. The intellect is still subtler, and yet, even this also is an 'object' experienced by us. When we thus move more and more into the inward chambers in ourselves, we almost reach the subtlest of the thought-existence: the intellectual field for the play of our ideas and ideologies, such as 'I know' 'I understand', etc. When these thought-waves sleep down, when there is nothing for the Consciousness to illumine at that rare and sacred moment, the Pure Consciousness alone remains illumining Itself, as a silent street lamp at midnight stands illumining itself.

In terms of the familiar analogy of the dream; the dreamer none other than the waker; as the dreamer *himself* when he wakes up from his dream, rediscovers *himself* to be the waker, so too in the Supreme plane of Self-Awareness and Bliss when all duality has ended therein, when I remain in my Own Real nature, to understand, realise, and experience that Bliss of Self *(Swaroopanananda)* no other illumination is necessary. It is a question of one awakening oneself to that State of God-consciousness—the Self-hood.

निषिध्य निखिलोपाधी-
श्नेति नेतीति वाक्यत: ।

निषिध्यैक्यं महावाक्यै-
र्जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः ॥ ३० ॥

Nishidhya Nikhilopadheen
Neti-Neti-Iti Vakyatah
Vidyat-Aikyam Maha-Vakyai
Jeevatma Paramatmanoh 30

निषिध्य—after negating, **निखिलोपाधीन्**—all conditionings, **'न इति'**—'not this', **'न इति'**—'not this', **इति**—thus, **वाक्यतः**—from the scriptural statements (commandments), **विद्यात्**—know, **ऐक्यं**—oneness, **महावाक्यैः**—by the great Mahavakyas, **जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः**—of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul.

30. By a process of negation of the conditionings (Upadhis) *through the help of the scriptural statement* 'it is not this, It is not this', *the oneness of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, as indicated by the great* Mahavakyas, *has to be realised.*

The Vedic aphorisms *(Maha-Vakyas)* are (1) "That thou art" (2) "This Atman is Brahman" (3) "Consciousness is Brahman" (4) "I am Brahman." All these point out the Non-dual identity between the individual soul *(Jiva)* and the Supreme Soul *(Atma)* since the Reality behind them both is the One Brahman, the Absolute.

In this Stanza the way to Self-realisation by a process of negation of the limiting factors of the individual, —*i.e.*, the gross, the subtle and the causal body envelopments, and also of the not-self *(Anatma)* objects as perceived by us in the outer world through these bodies—is indicated. This way leads the seeker on, and he ends in the ultimate realisation that the individual soul is in its own real nature nothing but the Supreme Soul *(Paramatman)* Itself.

The Pure Consciousness in me is the Absolute Reality, and this alone, which is in you and in every other being, is the Self everywhere. The Guru imparts this truth as *("That thou art")*. The seeker after truth in his burning aspirations to reach the goal,

analyses his own mattervestures *(Upadhis)* and also their corresponding objects in the outer world; the body and the sense objects, the mind and its feelings, and the intellect and its thoughts. With his powers of discrimination he rejects every one of them as not-self. Time, space and causality are also negated as perceptions of the mind and intellect. In this process of negation "Not this"-"Not this" *('neti' 'neti')* when one has realised that one is no more any one of the non-Self vestures *(Anatma kosas)*[1] within or without, the perception and realisation of the One Eternal Truth that persists in every one of the objects becomes in him a living experience, as "the only Permanent in the impermanent".[1]

The *'Mahavakyas'* are no mere aphorisms, but they are the golden keys which open the gate-way to a richer experience which is beyond words and equally beyond the comprehension by our intellect. By a process of negation of the false and the assertion of the positive Truth, one reaches the holy land of the full and pregnant spiritual experience: 'I am Brahman' *(Aham Brahmasmi).*

That in all the *Mahavakyas* there is an implied suggestion of plurality is a criticism that we generally hear, raised by the *Dwaitins* against the Shankara-philosophy. According to the dualists, the very *Mahavakya* "That Thou Art" implies in its two distinct pronouns indicating two different objects. "That" meaning the unknown goal to be realised and "Thou" meaning the seeker: and, therefore, there are the two aspects, the seeker and the sought, each having a distinctly separate existence. Two different things cannot be one and the same: therefore, at best, a seeker can only keep a relative relationship with the Ideal and can never hope to gain oneness with and be the Perfection.

Acharya Shankara meets this controversy by indicating that in the ordinary conversation we often employ this sort of a superficially dualistic declaration to indicate in essence a non-dual factor: for example, *"this is that* Gupta". Here, though two pronouns are used as "This" and "that", they indicate one and the same Mr. Gupta. The difference is only in the conditionings around Mr. Gupta. "That Mr. Gupta whom you met, at Banaras, in 1950, as a petty shop-keeper, is this Mr. Gupta now we meet, in Delhi, in 1960, as a multi-millionaire." The conditioning factors around Mr. Gupta then and

1. Refer Swamiji's Discourses on KATHOPANISHAD. (V-13).

now are certainly different: Banaras is not Delhi, 1950, is not 1960, a petty shop-keeper is not a multi-millionaire. But when the conditionings are removed, the individual whom we met in the past in Benaras under certain conditions is the very same individual whom we are meeting today in a different period of time and place and under different conditions.

Similarly, this *Jeeva* conditioned by the body, mind, and intellect, bound by its own Vasanas, tempted by an endless array of objects, going through a thousand sorrows and despairs, is the same as the Unconditioned Infinite Immutable *Sachidananda* Truth. The *Jeeva* in its limitations and sorrows can never be the All-Blissful, Unlimited Brahman; but, at the same, when the Jeeva dissociates itself from all its mater-embellishments, it gets relieved from its ego-centric individuality and comes to experience the Truth Divine.

The term *"Asi"* indicates this common denominator in both the *Jeeva* and the Supreme. The Infinite conditioned by matter is the *Jeeva;* the *Jeeva,* that having transcended its equipments comes to rediscover itself to be nothing other than the Immaculate Divine.

आविद्यकं शरीरादि दृश्यं
बुद्बुदवत्क्षरम् ।
एतद्विलक्षणं विद्या-
दहं ब्रह्मेति निर्मलम् ॥ ३१ ॥

Aavidyakam Sareeradi Drisyam
Bood-Bood-Avat Ksharam
Yetat Vilakshanam Vidyad-
Aham Brahmeti Nirmalam 31

आ+आविद्यकं—upto the causal body, **शरीरादि**—body, etc., **दृश्यं**—perceived objects, **बुद्बुदवत्**—as bubbles, **क्षरम्**—perishable, **एतद्विलक्षणम्**—separate from all these, **विद्यात्**—realise, **अहं**—I, **ब्रह्म**—Brahman, **इति**—thus, **निर्मलम्**—pure.

31. The body, etc., up to the "Causal Body"—Ignorance—

which are objects perceived, are as perishable as bubbles. Realise through discrimination that I am the 'Pure Brahman' ever completely separate from all these.

The five layers of matter explained earlier are all vehicles for the life to express through. The gross body, the subtle body and the causal bodies, are all conditionings[1] through which the Consciousness, through a process of identification,[2] expresses Itself as an experiencer in the different planes of Consciousness.[3] The Self, identifying with the "gross-body" becomes the *Waker,* who experiences the waking state, and the same Self when shifts Its identifications entirely to the "subtle-body", It becomes the *Dreamer* now, who was himself the *Waker* before. The dreamer lives his dreams and gathers his experiences of the dream world's multiplicity. The Self, who has thus played the part of the waker and the dreamer, when It withdraws Itself to identify with the "causal-body", It again acquires to Itself, the attitude of the *Sleeper,* who enjoys the total negation of the multiple experiences which It enjoyed or suffered during the earlier planes of Consciousness namely the waking and the dream.

If the Self, in its identifications with the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies, becomes the waker, the dreamer and the deep-sleeper, the Self in Itself must be something other than Its manifestations in these three states. Here the stanza asserts that it is so, and the seekers are asked to rediscover the Self which is other than the perishable matter envelopments, through a close subjective realisation.

It is only through discrimination I must undo the evil and realise that what is 'perceived' or brought within the field of my perceptions, feelings and comprehensions must be different from the perceiver (the sense-organs), the feeler (the mind) and the

1. An equipment through which when energy passes gets converted into some manifestation is called the engine or the conditioning.

2. To live and act as "I am the body" is our body-identification. During an identification the subject forgets his own real nature and projects himself on some other person or thing and suffers and enjoys its sorrows and joys is identification.

3. The Waking-state, the Dream-state and the dreamless Deep-sleep-state are called the three planes of Consciousness.

comprehending faculty (the intellect). The Divine Spark within me is the one illuminator who illuminates everyone of these objects. Things illumined are always different from the illuminator. Objects recognised by me are then certainly different from the Pure Self within me, the Eternal Subject.

देहान्यत्वान्न मे जन्म-
जराकार्श्यलयादयः ।
शब्दादिविषयैः सङ्गो
निरीन्द्रियतया न च ॥ ३२ ॥

Deha-Annyatwad-Na-Me-Janma-
Jara-Karsya-Layadayah
Sabdadi-Vishayai Sangah
Nireendriyataya Na Cha 32

देहान्यत्वात्—because of Its being other than the body, **न**—not, **मे**—for me, **जन्म**—birth, **जरा**—wrinkling, **कार्श्य**—senility, **लयादयः**—death, etc., **शब्दादिविषयैः**—with sense-objects such as sound, etc., **सङ्गः**—association, **निरीन्द्रियतया**—because It is without the sense organs, **न**—not, **च**—and.

32. I am other than the body and so I am free from changes such as birth, wrinkling, senility, death, etc. I have nothing to do with the sense objects such as sound and taste, for I am without the sense-organs.

The idea of an Eternal Substratum for the entire multiple world has been already established. Now in the following six verses,[1] the processes of negation of the body, mind and intellect are given so that we may experience ultimately the Self as the sole illuminator of all objects.

If I am not the body, the merciless destinies through which it is being dragged are also not mine. The endless changes that come to me—birth, growth, decay, disease, and death—in my pilgrimage, from birth to death, all belong to the physical body, because 'I' the Self, am unborn. When there is no birth for Me there can be no

1. Stanzas 32 to 37.

death either, and, therefore, no other changes such as growth, senility, etc., can ever come to me. If I mistake any of these to be mine, it is unfortunately the tragic error of the limited ego in me suffering from the body consciousness.

Being other than the body, I am unattached to the sense-objects as well. If I am not the physical body or the sense-organs, what then am I? A zero? A non-entity?

I am that Consciousness which illumines all this dead world of matter in and around me—the Absolute One, the Immutable Spirit that revels everywhere, which remains ever unattached.

अमनस्त्वान्न मे
दुःखरागद्वेषभयादयः ।
अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रः
इत्यादि श्रुतिशासनात् ॥ ३३ ॥

Amanastwad Na-Me
Duhkh-Raga-Dwesh-Bhayadayah
Aprano-Hi-Amana Subhra
Ityadi Sruti Sasanath 33

अमनस्त्वात् —because of not being the mind, **न**—not, **मे**—for me, **दुःख**—sorrow, **राग**—attachment, **द्वेष**—malice, **भयादयः** —fear, etc., **अप्राणः**—without breath, **हि**—verily, **अमनाः**—without mind, **शुभ्रः**—pure, **इत्यादि**—etc., **श्रुतिशासनात्**—for the great scripture says so.

33. I am other than the mind and hence, I am free from sorrow, attachment, malice and fear, for "HE is without breath, and without mind, Pure, etc," is the Commandment of the great scripture, the Upanishads.

The mind is that substantial hallucination of terrific force and irresistable might that we feel in ourselves when our thoughts flow. It is ever changing in its contents and in its moods. Without a "thought-flow" (mind) man does not exist as man even for a

moment. All the same I am not the mind, although "I have a mind" My real nature is the Self, the Changeless and the Eternal. The idiosyncrasies of the mind are its own creation. The mind flourishes on thoughts, and thoughts gurgle from my own desire, acquired from my perception and experience of objects extraneous to myself. When I am thus really something other than the mind, and when I realise that it is the illumination of my Self that gives the power of awareness to this inert matter, the mind, I cannot but remain perfectly unaffected by the eruptions in that aspect of my physical structure. When I have awakened from my dream I no longer can mourn for the dream-child that died in my dream. I have ceased to identify myself with the mental emotions and so how can I, be any longer a victim of the onslaught of sorrow, fear, etc., which are but the modifications of my mind? I am without a mind, I am Pure Intelligence itself: I am that Higher and Imperishable Truth which is beyond all explanations and beyond the concept of time but within the "experience" of everyone when there is Self-realisation.

Even Sankara must not assert dogmatic assertions without reference to the scriptures. Hence he quotes his authority: the Upanishads.

निर्गुणो निष्क्रियो नित्यो
निर्विकल्पो निरञ्जनः ।
निर्विकारो निराकारो
नित्यमुक्तोऽस्मि निर्मलः ॥ ३४ ॥

Nirguno-Nishkriya-Nityo
Nirvikalpo Niranjanah
Nirvikaro Nirakaro
Nitya-Mukto-smi Nirmalah 34

निर्गुणः—without attributes, **निष्क्रियः**—without actions, **नित्यः**—eternal, **निर्विकल्पः**—without any desire and thought, **निरञ्जनः**—without any dirt, **निर्विकारः**—without any change, **निराकारः**—

without form, **नित्यमुक्तः**—ever liberated, **अस्मि**—I am, **निर्मलः**—ever-pure.

34. I am without attributes and actions; Eternal (Nitya) *without any desire and thought* (Nirvikalpa), *without any dirt* (Niranjana), *without any change* (Nirvikara), *without form* (Nirakara), *ever-liberated* (Nitya mukta) *ever-pure* (Nirmala).

A substance is that which has got physical and chemical properties *(Gunas).* All substances are matter. The spirit is indicated here definitely as something other than matter by the phrase that 'it is without properties'. I the Self am without properties. Matter has properties and matter is finite. The spirit has no properties. Spirit, the Self, is therefore Eternal. Desires and thoughts arise from the mind-intellect equipment, and naturally, the Self, which is the Truth Transcending these two, has none of these characteristic features. By these two preceding terms and gross body and the subtle body are negated in the *Atman.* So too the causal body[1] is negated by the next term. "It is dirtless"—meaning bereft of all *Vasanas,* Immaculate.

Such a Truth having all the above four aspects must be one without any change and also without form. Naturally it must be ever-liberated and ever-pure.

When I have negatived all the superimposed limitations, the One Substratum on which hangs all this world of matter, the One Awareness, *"Asmi"* which illumines all thoughts, stands Itself gloriously alone, and I rediscover myself to be *That.* That is the changeless in the changing phenomena, "like the gold in the ornaments," "the mud in the pots", the Immutable Spirit. That real Self of mine is Formless and Free, Eternal and Pure and without attributes and action.

अहमाकाशवत्सर्वं
बहिरन्तरगतोऽच्युतः ।

1. The total *Vasanas* constituting the *Avidya* is the causal body.

सदा सर्वसमश्शुद्धो
निस्सङ्गो निर्मलोऽचलः ॥ ३५ ॥

Ahamakasavad Sarvam
Bahir-Antar-Gato-Achyutah
Sada Sarva-Sama-Suddho
Nissango Nirmalo-Achalah 35

अहं—I, **आकाशवत्**—like space, **सर्वं**—all things, **बहिः**—without, **अन्तः**—within, **गतः**—fill-in, **अच्युतः**—changeless, **सदा**—always, **सर्वसमः**—same in all, **शुद्धः**—pure, **निसङ्गः**—unattached, **निर्मलः**—stainless, **अचलः**—motionless.

35. Like the space I fill all things within and without. Changeless and the same in all, at all times I am pure, unattached, stainless and motionless.

The assertion of my real nature is continued. Space fills up all things in this world and even that seemingly endless Element of infinite expanse is a mere concept of the mind. That which is beyond time, space and causality is the Self in me and this cannot be localised at any given part in this body. Also Space *(Akasa)* allows things to exist in it, but itself never gets contaminated by the things which find their accommodation and existence in space. So too the Self, though it allows the perceptions of the Non-self in It, is not contaminated by them.

In the nature of my existence I am Eternal and Immutable, and one and the same in all, and equally divine in all beings. I am the Pure Self, uncontaminated by the layers of matter around me, unattached, ever stainless, I am that All-pervading Brahman.

नित्यशुद्धविमुक्तैक-
मखण्डानन्दमद्वयम् ।

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं
यत्परं ब्रह्माहमेव तत् ॥ ३६ ॥

Nitya-Sudh-Vimukt-Aikam
Akhanda-Ananda-Madvayam
Satyam-Gyana-Manantam
Yat-Param Bramha-Meva Tath 36

नित्य—Eternal, **शुद्ध**—Pure, **विमुक्त**—Free, **एकम्**—One, **अखण्डानन्दम्**—indivisible-bliss, **अद्वयम्**—non-dual, **सत्यं**—truth (changeless in all the three periods of time), **ज्ञानम्**—Knowledge, **अनन्त**—Infinite, **यत्परं ब्रह्म**—that Supreme Brahman, **अहमेव**—I alone, **तत्**—that.

36. I am verily that Supreme Brahman alone which is Eternal, Pure and Free, One, indivisible and non-dual, and of the nature of Changeless-Knowledge-Infinite.

The nature of *our* own Self is again and again here repeated by Acharya Shankara, because constant awareness of this is the practice of Knowledge *(Gyana-Abhyasa)* and we have to, as true vedantins, bring *That* into our own personal experience. For purposes of meditation we need these stanzas. To contemplate over them and to feel them sincerely is the direct path to experience It.

Those alone who constantly practise the control of the mind and retreat inch by inch from the dark despairs of the matter envelopments, can grow more and more in their spiritual strength. This brings the glow of the God-consciousness deep into their hearts and when the ignorance,—which causes the veiling of truth and the agitations of the mind,—has gradually weakened and when there is no more the eruption of the self-centred egoistic thoughts of passions and sense-impulses, we are awakened to the Knowledge of the Self. This glory in us is ever Pure, Eternal and Indivisible as previously stated, and this Supreme Existence is Truth-Knowledge-Absolute. *(Satyam-Gnanam-Anandam).*

एवं निरन्तराभ्यस्ता
ब्रह्मैवास्मीति वासना।
हरत्यविद्याविक्षेपान्
रोगानिव रसायनम् ॥ ३७ ॥

Evam-Nirantara-Abhyasta
Brahamaiva-Asmi-Iti-Vasana
Haratya-Avidya-Vikshepan
Roganiva Rasayanam 37

एवम्—thus, **निरन्तराभ्यस्ता**—practised constantly, **ब्रह्मैवास्मि**—I an Brahman' **इति**—thus, **वासना**—impression, **हरति**—destroys, **अविद्याविक्षेपान्**—ignorance and agitation (caused by *Avidya*), **रोगान्**—disease, **इव**—like, **रसायनम्**—medicine.

37. The impression "I am Brahman" *thus created by constant practice destroys ignorance, and the agitation caused by it, just as medicine or* rasayana *destroys disease.*

The knowledge of the identity of Brahman-Atman above stated, when intensified by long reflection, destroys ignorance just as medicine administered cures the disease, and itself gets eliminated.

Constant practice is emphasised because over a period of lives in the past, a lot of *"Vasanas"* have accumulated, and we have to get over them; and also we must eliminate all our attachment and identification with our body-mind-intellect-equipment. Here the seeker after Truth should ever remember the detached nature of the Pure Self and thus come to give up all his identifications with his material sheaths and therefore all his ego-centric misconceptions about himself.

It is the ego *(Jeeva)* that brings an individual again and again to bondage, and it is the ego again that keeps him bound to the world of ignorance. When the duality is removed, when ever the thought *"I am the Brahman"* is dissolved in the all-consuming Knowledge of the Self, there remains but one all-absorbing experience of the One

Supreme Self, Eternal, Infinite. This subjective experience *alone* is the final culmination of all spiritual seeking because the Self is *not* an object of cognition. It is the very Light which illumines all our experiences.

So by constant *"Gnana-Abhyasa"* we have to eliminate all the *Vasanas,* end the mind and come to experience that Self which is our real essential nature. Just as the medicine we take in of its own accord gets ultimately eliminated from us, so too the experience *"I am Brahman"* is also dissolved in that spiritual glow.[1] So long as we are not asleep we "try to sleep", but when we reach sleep all efforts end by themselves.

विविक्तदेश आसीनो
विरागो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
भावयेदेकमात्मानं
तमनन्तमनन्यधीः ॥ ३८ ॥

Vivikta-desa-Aseeno
Virago-Vigitendriyaha
Bhavayet-Ekam-Atmanam
Tam-Anantam-Ananya-Dheehi 38

विविक्तदेशे—in a solitary place, **आसीनः**—seated, **विरागः**—free from desires, **विजितेन्द्रियः**—controlling the senses, **भावयेत्**—meditate, **तं**—that, **एकं**—One, **आत्मानं**—the Self, **अनन्तं**—boundless, **अनन्यधीः**—with unswering attention.

38. Sitting in a solitary place, freeing the mind from desires and

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1. Refer *Ibid.* Stanza 5—In place of "I am body" idea in case the seeker maintains the constant remembrance that *"I am Brahman"*, it will create a new set of Divine *Vasanas,* which shall act as an antidote to the ego-centric *Vasanas.* The individuality sense *(Jiva-Bhavana)* brings about more and more agitations, which Spiritual *Vasana (Brahma-Vasanas)* quieten the thought-glow. This process will continue until the last of the thoughts end and in the Supreme Silence of the mind, the *Brahma Vasana* also ends—leaving the seeker to experience the Self.

controlling the senses, meditate with unswering attention on the Atman *which is One without-a-second.*

The path of meditation which takes you face to face to the Reality is explained here. Sitting in a lonely place with no disturbances around you, with no agitations of the mind or any wild roamings of the intellect—leaving behind all mental emotions and intellectual thoughts, which generally make the corner you sit noisy with your thundering desires and roaring expectations,—and with the sense-organs *(Indriyas)* now brought perfectly under your own control, identify the Self, indicated above, as your own nature—this is meditation. Make it real. Meditate without any other thought in your mind, in that quiet and sequestered atmosphere. Meditate upon that infinite *Atman*...which is one without a second. Be bold to assert the holy idea—in that lonely intellectual field, which transcends the concept of time—that you are that very same Supreme Being which is All-pervading, Pure and Eternal. This self-transformation is called *Bhavana.*[1]

आत्मन्येवाखिलं दृश्यं
प्रविलाप्य धिया सुधीः ।
भावयेदेकमात्मानं
निर्मलाकाशवत्सदा ॥ ३९ ॥

Atmanyeva-Akhilam Drisyam
Pravilapya-Dhiya-Sudheehi
Bhavayed-Ekam-Atmanam
Nirmal-Akasavat Sada 39

आत्मन्येव—in the *Atman* alone, **अखिलं**—entire, **दृश्यं**—world-of-object, **प्रविलाप्य**—merging, **धिया**—(by his) intelligence, **सुधीः**—

1. It is very difficult to find even an appropriate word in English for the Sanskrit term *Bhavana.* It is not a mere intellectual appreciation, nor is it a mere emotional wooing. And yet it is both. When both the functions of intellect, thinking, and the functions of the mind, feeling, are harmoniously woven together we get the "heart" and its function the *Bhavana.* The ardent courtings of the intellect and the mind end in their marriage at the altars of heart, and the joy of this nuptial is *Bhavana.*

wise man, **भावयेत्**—should think, **एकं**—one, **आत्मानं**—the Self, **निर्मलाकाशवत्**—like the stainless or (pure) sky, **सदा**—constantly.

39. The wise one should intelligently merge the entire world-of-objects in the Atman *alone and constantly think of the Self ever as contaminated by anything as the sky.*

Intelligent discrimination is the core of a seeker's success in Truth-discovering. When he has realised the supremacy of the Self, does the outer world exist for him? If not, why is it so? How does it happen?

The Pure intellect in its light of discrimination has brought for the seeker the Truth experience. In that light of discrimination if we analyse and withdraw ourselves completely from the matter envelopments, we should thereafter have no more occasion to moan over the past, agitate at the present or worry for the future. There can be no more any wrong perceptions of the Truth for us.

When we cross over the frontiers of our dream experiences, the dream-world with all its things merge into our own mind and the same dreamer now rediscovers himself to be the waker Likewise the Pure Awareness in me which illumines for me the objects of the outer world merges back upon Itself, when the world of plurality is not recognised. When the mind is single-pointed, it has no accommodation for anything else. Just as the dream-world has gone back and merged into the very mind that dreamt the dream, so too the world of perceptions ends in the experience of the *Atman,* the illuminator of all finite experiences.

रूपवर्णादिकं सर्वं
विहाय परमार्थवित्।
परिपूर्णचिदानन्द-
स्वरूपेणावतिष्ठते ॥ ४० ॥

Roopa-Varna-Adikam Sarvam
Vihaya Paramartha-Vit

Paripoorna Chit-Ananda
Swaroopena-Avatishtathe 40

रूपवर्णादिकं —form, colour, etc., **सर्वं** —everything, **विहाय** —discarding, **परमार्थवित्** —one who has realised the Supreme, **परिपूर्णचिदानन्दस्वरूपेण** —as an embodiment of the Infinite Consciousness and Bliss, **अवतिष्ठते** —becomes (remains).

40. He who has realised the Supreme, discards all his identification with the objects of names and forms. (Thereafter) he dwells as an embodiment of the Infinite Consciousness and Bliss. He becomes the Self.

The way to realise the Supreme and to be ever in the experience of the Infinite Consciousness and Bliss has been already explained; the only path is single-pointed meditation. When by constant practice of meditation one has become an experiencer (knower) of the Paramatman *(Paramatma-vit)* to him are no more the illusory multiplicities which were but false superimpositions upon the substratum, the Self.

The world of names and forms has merged into the substratum and the knower of the Self becomes the knower of the Supreme-Self *(Paramatma-vit),* himself an embodiment of the Infinite Consciousness and Bliss. The dreamer cannot see, experience or understand the waker...the dreamer at that moment himself becomes the waker...no more are the dreams for him...he has awakened to a brighter, clearer, ampler world of the waking-state consciousness. Just as the dreamer has ended his dream on waking up, so too all the perceptions of the world recognised by the limited ego ends when it realises the Supreme State of Pure Consciousness. He becomes Himself the Brahman.

ज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेयभेदः
परे नात्मनि विद्यते।
चिदानन्दैकरूपत्वा-
द्दीप्यते स्वयमेव हि ॥ ४१ ॥

Gyatr-Gyana-Gyeya Bhedah
Pare Na-Atmani Vidyate
Chidananda-Eka-Roopattwad-
Deepyate Swayameva-Hi 41

ज्ञातृ—Knower, **ज्ञान**—Knowledge, **ज्ञेय**—Object of Knowledge, **भेदः**—(these) differences, **परे**—Supreme, **न**—not, **आत्मनि**—in the Self, **विद्यते**—is, **चिदानन्दैक रूपत्वात्**—because of (the being) of the nature of Knowledge and Bliss, **दीप्यते**—shines, **स्वयम्**—by itself, **एव**—alone, **हि**—verily.

41. There are no distinctions such as "Knower", the "Knowledge" and the "Object of Knowledge" in the Supreme Self. On account of Its being of the nature of endless Bliss, It does not admit of such distinctions within Itself. It alone shines by Itself.

The intellect is capable of perceiving only objects other than itself, and so all our knowledge is constituted by the knowledge of "things-other-than-ourselves". An intelligent life in this world, in terms of our lived experiences of knowing things, is possible only by a contact of the *experiencer* with the *objects-of-experience*. A world of objects is as much necessary as the subject who is the experiencer, and between the experiencer and the experienced a certain relationship should remain which is called the *experiencing*. Without these three fundamental factors: the subject, the object and the necessary relationship between the two, no experience is possible at our present condition of body-intellect existence.

Being Non-dual, Homogeneous and Eternal the Self cannot suffer in Itself and distinctions such as the subject or the object and, therefore, every seeker comes to ask: *"how will I then realise or experience the Self, and with what instrument will I experience It when I have transcended the body perceptions, mental feelings and intellectual thoughts?"* Transcending these known equipments and their fields of objects if there be the Truth, who will realise It, and by what instrument? The answer is that the Self is the very Consciousness by which all thought, feelings, and perceptions are

1. No other knowledge is necessary: here the term "Knowledge" is used to mean "instrument of knowing". *Cf.* Swamiji's Discourses on *'Geeta'* XIII 7-11. Carefully read the portion explaining the *"Gyanam"* in that particular context.

illumined and when all these are eliminated to know Knowledge no other[1] "knowledge" is necessary. Self is Knowledge itself; It is Consciousness itself. When all the furniture is removed from a room in the day time what happens to the sun? It illumines on itself whether there are objects or not, and to see the sun no other torch is necessary.

एवमात्मारणौ ध्यान-
मथने सततं कृते।
उदितावगतिर्ज्वाला
सर्वाज्ञानेन्धनं दहेत् ॥ ४२ ॥

Evam-Atma-Aranow Dhyana
Mathane Saatatam-Krite
Uditavagatih-Jwala
Sarva-Agyana-Indhanam Dahet 42

एवं—thus, **आत्म–अरणौ**—in the Arani of the Self, **ध्यानमथने**—churning in the form of contemplation, **सततं**—constantly, **कृते**—when done, **उदितावगतिः**—knowledge which is born, **ज्वाला**—the flame, **सर्वाज्ञानेन्धनं**—all the fuel of ignorance, **दहेत्**—shall burn.

42. When thus the lower and the higher aspects of the Self are well churned together, the fire of knowledge is born from it, which in its mighty conflagration shall burn down all the fuel of ignorance in us.

When there is a constant churning of Knowledge *(Dhyana Mathana)* in you of the right idea that you are the Self and not a combination of the mere body-mind stuff, when such constructive thoughts that can lead you to the goal are consistently nourished by you in meditation with single-pointed devotion—when you churn out the "fire of knowledge" in yourself by a process of right understanding and discrimination by your own intellect—then, in that revelation and experience of your own Self, as Absolute Bliss, ignorance fades away. In that "fire of knowledge" so kindled to a

mighty conflagration all misconceptions *(Agyana)* are burnt down as fuel is consumed by the ordinary fire.

The *"Churning of Knowledge"* is elaborately described in the *Kaivalyopanishad.*[1] In the ancient days, for the purposes of the rituals, fire was produced by turning a wooden rod on two wooden pieces hollowed out for the ends-of-the-rod to rest. When the rod is churned in these sockets, pressed down firmly the friction creates heat and fire. This idea is taken here in this beautiful metaphor. The lower ego and the higher Self are pressed to the *Mahamantra* "I am the Supreme Self" *(Aham Brahmasmi)* and when through reflection it is churned properly, the 'fire of knowledge' is generated, and meditation fans it into a conflagration. In this all our "ignorance" and misconceptions are burnt down.[2]

अरुणेनेव बोधेन
पूर्वं सन्तमसे हृते ।
तत आविर्भवेदात्मा
स्वयमेवांशुमानिव ॥ ४३ ॥

Aruneneva Bodhena
Poorvam-Santamase-Hrite
Tata Avibhavet-Atma
Swayameva-Amsuman Eva 43

अरुणेन—by the Lord of the early dawn *(Aruna),* **इव**—like, **बोधेन**—by the knowledge, **पूर्वं**—beforehand, **सन्तमसे**—the universal darkness, **हृते**—when destroyed, **ततः**—then, **आविर्भवेत्**-rises, **आत्मा**—the Self, **स्वयमेव**—of its own accord, **अंशुमान्**—the Sun, **इव**—like.

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1. Read Discourses on *'Kaivalyopanishad'* by Swami Chinmaya: Mantra 11. *Kaivalyopanishad* is one of the "minor Upanishads" and no exhaustive Commentary is available upon it elsewhere.

2. These "ashes" of the burnt-up *Vasanas* are the very glory *(Bhooshan)* of Lord Parameswara *(Vibhooti).* The cow-dung-ashes are symbolical only. Thus the glory of a man of culture and perfection is that "he has burnt up his lower nature in the fire" of his own higher understanding of life and its Consummate Goal.

43. The Lord of the early dawn (Aruna) *himself has already looted away the thick darkness, when soon the sun rises. The Divine Consciousness of the Self rises when the right knowledge has already killed the darkness in the bosom.*

Ignorance is the thick pal of *'Vasanas'*. We have to break through this darkness before we can get into the lit up Citadel of Truth, the treasure-house of the experience divine.

Soon after the early dawn, a very short time after the East has glowed with the golden hue of the dawn the sun emerges to illumine the life in this world. *Aruna* the dawn, heralds up the sun. Similarly, when we have constantly and diligently performed our meditation on Truth and have by it begun to destroy the ego-centric existence in us, in the very same process the darkness which was obstructing the vision of the Self in us is also removed, giving us the experience of Oneness revealing to our experience our own Self.

That which obstructs the vision of the Self is our own mental agitations and ego-centric vanities. Meditation quietens the thought-flow and consequently the mind's extrovertedness. When a mind, thus passified and withdrawn from its outer activities, turns inward, it springs forth to drown itself in the experience of the Self and to become one with It.

आत्मा तु सततं प्राप्तोऽ
प्यप्राप्तवदविद्यया ।
तन्नाशे प्राप्तवद्भाति
स्वकण्ठाभरणं यथा ॥ ४४ ॥

Atma-Tu Satatam Praptah
Api-Apraptavat-Avidyaya
Tan-nase Praptavat Bhati
Swa-Kantha-Abharanam Yatha 44

आत्मा—the Self, **तु**—verily, **सततं**—always, **प्राप्तः**—(the Reality) that is present, **अपि**—yet, **अप्राप्तवत्**—is not realised, **अविद्यया**—because of ignorance, **तन्नाशे**—at the destruction of ignorance, **प्राप्तवत्**—like an object newly gained, **भाति**—appears, **स्वकण्ठाभरणं**—the ornament of one's neck, **यथा**—just as.

44. Atman *is an ever-present Reality. Yet, because of ignorance it is not realised. On the destruction of ignorance* Atman *is realised. It is like the missing ornament of one's neck.*

Knowledge lies veiled by ignorance. *"Ajnanena avrutam Gyanam"*. No one can give a dreamer his experience as a waker. The dreamer himself is the waker. Similarly, there is no need to acquire or create a new personality in me to get into the higher realm of experience. I am EVER the Eternal-Infinite-Bliss. If, however, I am not that alreay, and if I have to build up that new condition for me then listening to the study of the reflection upon and the meditation on the Upanishadic texts are the means prescribed. Yet we cannot say that because of these practices Atman is "created"—if experience of the Self is *due* to the Sadhana, then when the Sadhana, the cause, ends, the experience, the effect, must also end. What is created must die and end. The Infinite, therefore, cannot be created as a result of the Sadhana. The Self is ever with us... We only recognise it when the causes for its veiling are removed through constant and sincere Sadhana.

This Atman is in all the states of experiences and in all beings and at all times. He is awake even while we are asleep, but we have not been aware of this Eternal Self in us, due to our preoccupations with the misapprehensions of the Reality. In fact we live because of Its illumination, but we are blind to that Divine Light. When ignorance is removed, when we are moved off from the enveloping darkness, the cataract in the "wisdom-eye" is cured, the glory of the Self is revealed—just as when the clouds move away, the Sun, whose light is already there, shines upon us.

When we have removed in ourselves the veiling over the ever-existent Self we exclaim *"as though"* we have found out something which was not already there and this, however, is not the case. We are lamenting over something which we have not lost. We felt

miserable over the loss of something which was not actually lost, but on the other hand it had all along with us. Sometimes we search for and get tired of our weary disappointments, when we cannot find our key which perhaps lies all the time in our own pocket. A lady can despair at the loss of a necklace, which is often still on her neck! We only rediscover the Self, which was all the time with us. When our ignorance regarding it ends through the discipline-of-meditations, we only *rediscover* the Self, which was all the time with us.

स्थाणौ पुरुषवद्भ्रान्त्या
कृता ब्रह्मणि जीवता।
जीवस्य तात्त्विके रूपे
तस्मिन्दृष्टे निवर्तते ॥ ४५ ॥

Stanow Purushavad-Bhrantya
Krita Brahmani Jeevataa
Jeevasya Tatvike Roope
Tasmin-Drishte Nivartate 45

स्थाणौ —in the post, **पुरुषवत्**—like the man, **भ्रान्त्या**—because of delusion, **कृता**—is made, **ब्रह्मणि**—in the Brahman, **जीवता**—the jiva-hood (individuality), **जीवस्य**—of the Jiva, **तात्त्विके रूपे**-in the real nature, **तस्मिन्**—in the Self, **दृष्टे** —where seen, **निवर्तते** —is destroyed.

45. Brahman appears to be a 'Jiva' *because of ignorance, just as a post appears to be a ghost. The ego-centric-individuality is destroyed when the real nature of the* 'Jiva' *is realised as the Self.*

In delusion alone can we imagine and recognise a post to be a ghost. In fact, the *misapprehension* of the ghost has risen only from the *non-apprehension* of the post. Similarly on the Brahman, which is the Supreme Self and the Substratum for all, our ignorance projects our ego-centric existence, and its world of diversity. In this confused state, we spin and weave in us for ourselves a cobweb of our own creation. Thereafter we get ourselves identified with our

body, mind and intellect. We are caught thus entirely in a net of our own creations hatched from our own ignorance.

When we have understood the One Truth behind all this multiple existence, when we have begun to see the post behind the ghost, when we have started to experience the Self in us, like a dream, which in the end rolls back into the dreamer, all this illusory existence loses its imaginary reality—the apparent truth with which we had painted them all in gay enchantment.

The non-apprehension of the post caused all the misapprehensions as the head, trunk, limbs, dress, eyes, movements, etc., of the vivid vision of the ghost. The misconception was the ghost on the post. When the cause, the misconception dies, the effect, the ghost, also ends. When the ego-sense has ended, all that are its by-products are also removed, and there is no more any bondage suffered.

तत्त्वस्वरूपानुभवा-
दुत्पन्नं ज्ञानमञ्जसा ।
अहं ममेति चाज्ञानं
बाधते दिग्भ्रमादिवत् ॥ ४६ ॥

Tattva-Swaroop-Anubhavat
Utpannam-Gyanam-Anjasa
Aham-Mameti-Cha-Agyanam
Badhate Dig-Brahmadivat 46

तत्त्वस्वरूपानुभवात्—by experiencing the true nature of the Self, उत्पन्नं—produced, ज्ञानं—knowledge, अञ्जसा—instantly, अहं—I, मम—mine, इति—thus, च—and, अज्ञानं—the ignorance, बाधते—destroys, दिग्भ्रमादिवत्—like the wrong notion about the directions.

46. The ignorance characterised by the notions 'I' and 'Mine' is destoryed by the knowledge produced by the realisation of the true

nature of the Self, just as right information removes the wrong notion about the directions.

The experience born out of the knowledge and experience of the Reality in an individual immediately and instantaneously destroys the ignorance *(Agyana)* which gave rise to the wrong notions in him of a false ego earlier. This wrong conception of a limited, coloured, distorted personality has been the cause for the agency of action and for the notion of possession—the 'I' and 'mine' in everyone.

When you feel confused as to the directions in a new Town, whether it is East or West, the sunrise helps you to locate the directions correctly. Similarly, when the knowledge of the Real dawns, the limited ego-sense till now living, confused among the labyrinth of the matter vestures and their perceptions, feelings and thoughts, it gains an understanding of the right way of living in and experiencing through the various material equipments.

Shankara seems to foresee here the possibility of a logical doubt in the mind of an intelligent student. Ordinarily in our intellectual life, knowledge of one object cannot remove the ignorance of other objects—for instance, *knowledge* of a pot cannot end the *ignorance* of the watch and or the radio. Here the stanza seems to say that the knowledge arising out of the experience of the Self will remove the ignorance-created-concepts of "I-ness" and "My-ness". Apparently this is a contradiction to our daily intellectual experience.

In order to elucidate this idea, Shankara has chosen a very appropriate illustration indeed. When a traveller is in confusion as to the direction in which he is moving, and on enquiry if some local man were to indicate to him the West, the knowledge arising out of this indication will at once remove from his mind all his ignorance regarding the South, the East, and the North. This is because, the other quarters have a definite relationship with the one known direction, and with reference to this known direction, the traveller can, without any more help from the local man, know for himself the other three directions.

Similarly, when once the Self is known we shall immediately understand our true relationship with the world-of-objects around us and our own relationship with our matter envelopments. The sense

of 'I' and the concept of 'Mine' both become meaningless and delusory when the Self is realised as one Universal Reality, ever the same, within and without.

The directions are ever there whether we know them or not. So long as we are confused we take the east to be the west and so on. A right understanding gives us the true directions. So too, when Self is known we are able to fix our relationship in the world on surer footings...with more balanced vision.

सम्यक् विज्ञानवान् योगी
स्वात्मन्येवाखिलं जगत् ।
एकं च सर्वमात्मान-
मीक्षते ज्ञानचक्षुषा ॥ ४७ ॥

Samyak Vigyanavan Yogi
Swatmanye-Vakhilam Jagat
Ekam Cha Sarvam-Atmanam
Eekshate Gyana-Chakshusha 47

सम्यक्—very well, **विज्ञानवान्**—a man of realisation, **योगी**—the Yogin, **स्वात्मन्येव**—in his own Self, **अखिलं**—entire, **जगत्**—universe, **एकं**—one, **च**—and, **सर्वं**—everything, **आत्मानं**—his own Self, **ईक्षते**—sees, **ज्ञानचक्षुषा**—through (his) "eye-of-wisdom".

47. The Yogi of perfect realisation and enlightenment sees through his "eye of wisdom" (Gyana Chakshush) *the entire universe in his own Self, and regards everything else as his own Self and nothing else.*

The Yogi of full realisation of the True Self, who has been trained to integrate his mind and see everywhere the Oneness of the Self—the *'Mahatman'*, who has effaced his lower nature and who has learnt to live in harmony with the higher in him and in whose case the mind and intellect are well controlled without their disturbing pull towards the outer world of objects—that Super-man

sees the entire *Jagat* as the manifestation of his own Self, and experiences the Self in him to be the Self everywhere.

He is convinced that there is not a separate life-giving factor for the world outside the Self in him, or a different Illuminator for the different experiences in him. When the "eye of wisdom" is opened, just as the oneness of gold is realised in all the ornaments, the Supreme Reality alone is experienced to be the All-pervading—in him, and out of him; here and everywhere.

When the ego which kept him in bondage—the *'Jivatman'* which seemed to be labouring under limitations—is blasted to smithereens with the current of the Self-knowledge in him—he becomes a man of total and absolute fulfilment, the purpose of his life is achieved. The truth of his existence is realised. The Reality in him is experienced.

आत्मैनेदं जगत्सर्व-
मात्मनोऽन्यन्न विद्यते ।
मृदो यद्वद्घटादीनि
स्वात्मानं सर्वमीक्षते ॥ ४८ ॥

Atma-Eva-Edam Jagat Sarvam
Atmano Annyat Na Vidyate
Mrido Yad-Vad-Ghatadeeni
Svatmanam Sarva-Meekshate 48

आत्मा—the Atman, **एव**—verily, **इदं**—this, **जगत्**—Universe, **सर्वं**—entire, **आत्मनोऽन्यत्**—other than the Atman, **न**—not, **विद्यते**—exists, **मृदः**—from clay, **यद्वत्**—in that manner, **घटादीनि**—pots, etc., **स्वात्मानम्**—his own Self, **सर्वं**—everything, **ईक्षते**—sees.

48. Nothing whatever exists other than the Atman: the tangible universe is verily Atman. As pots and jars are verily made of clay and cannot be said to be anything but clay, so too, to the enlightened soul and that is perceived is the Self.

The whole world of experience has previously been stated as nothing but the expressions of one's own Self, and that beyond this Supreme there is nothing. How are we to accept this proposition that Atman alone is the essence in all the world of our experiences? *Atma eva jagat sarvam?*

Out of mud is made various kinds of pans and potteries. They come out of mud, exist in mud as mud, and finally go back to be deservedly called the same old mud. Without mud all the different shapes and forms could not have come about. The original mud alone gave the shape and substantially to the different existent pot-units. Just as there is no separate existence for the mud pans and pots apart from the mud—just as the waves in the ocean are the same as the waters on which they have risen up—so too the Self alone is the Reality which has given shape and life to the world of names and forms, and this is rightly understood by the man of wisdom, the enlightened soul.

The ordinary folk, who have no greater purpose in life than to direct their energies towards a hunt for the fleeting pleasures from the world of objects, cannot so easily recognise this subtle Presence everywhere. The Infinite rising from the Infinite pervades and envelops the entire finite. The multiplicity is but a projection upon the one Eternal Infinite.

जीवन्मुक्तस्तु तद्विद्वा-
न्पूर्वोपाधिगुणांस्त्यजेत् ।
सच्चिदानन्दरूपत्वात्
भवेद्भ्रमरकीटवत् ॥ ४९ ॥

Jeevanmuktasthu Tad-Vidvan
Poorvo-Padhi Gunan-Tyajet
Sachchidanand-Roopattwat
Bhavet Bhramara-Keetavat 49

जीवन्मुक्तः—liberated one, **तु**—verily, **तद्विद्वान्**—endowed with Self knowledge, **पूर्वोपाधिगुणान्**—traits of the previous equipments **त्यजेत्**—gives up, **सच्चिदानन्दरूपत्वात्**—because of (his) nature of

Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss, भवेत् —will be, भ्रमरकीटवत् — like a wasp.

49. A liberated one, endowed with Self-knowledge, gives up the traits of his previously explained equipments (Upâdhis), *and because of his nature of* Sat-chit-ananda, *he verily becomes Brahman like (the worm that grows to be) a wasp.*

A liberated one *(Jeevanmukta)* is one who has realised the infinitude of his existence as the Self, even while living in this world. He is one who, through his Self-realisation has become completely free from ignorance *(Avidya),* even while he lives in his body, which, however, continues to exist as long as its experiences *(Prarabda)* last. He is the enlightened soul who has so well integrated his spiritual personality as to renounce totally the properties of the matter envelopments and the ego, with his well directed, upright physical, mental and intellectual activities. He is one of the fortunate few who has died the "mystic death": the death of his personal limited individuality.

Such a *Jeevan mukta* who has lived the life of a spiritual giant, unshakable in his inward experience, and who has freed himself from all the attractions around him, lives as the Self in his own Divine Self. For him there is no question of any bondage from the earlier described gross, subtle and causal bodies *(Upadhis).* He who is the knower of the Brahman becomes the Brahman which he was asserting all through his years of meditation just as the worm becomes a wasp.

The wasp builds a mud nest with no other outlet but a small hole in it, and places a worm in it. Now and then stinging the worm the wasp sits at the door constantly. The helpless worm weary with fear and pain looks on constantly out where the terrible face of the wasp is there threatening to sting it again! The worm thus maintained in single-pointed contemplation over the form and nature of the wasp, grows itself with wings and totally metamorphoses to become a wasp itself.

Similarly, through his negation of matter and his assertions of the spirit, when the Yogi for years meditates upon the divine nature of the Self, the ego-centric limited individuality in him drops off its

worm-existence and become itself of the nature of the life principle, the Self.

तीर्त्वा मोहार्णवं हत्वा
रागद्वेषादिराक्षसान् ।
योगी शान्तिसमायुक्तः
आत्मारामो विराजते ॥ ५० ॥

Teertva Moharnavam Hatva
Ragadveshadi Rakshasan
Yogi Santi-Samayuktah
Atmaramo Virajate 50

तीर्त्वा—after crossing, **मोहार्णवं**—the ocean of delusion, **हत्वा**—killing, **रागद्वेषादिराक्षसान्**—the monsters of likes and dislikes, **योगी**—the yogi, **शान्तिसमायुक्तः**—united with peace, **आत्मारामः**—one who revels within himself, **विराजते**—shines.

50. After crossing the ocean of delusion and killing the monsters of likes and dislikes, the Yogi *who is united with peace dwells in the glory of his own realised Self...as an* Atmaram.

When the transformation is complete and the individualised ego-centric *Jiva* has rediscovered its pure nature as the Eternal Self, it crosses over all delusions which represent the *non-apprehension* of Reality—the causal body. The mental impressions gathered in his individualised existence all through his entire past together constitutes the ocean of delusion or ignorance. Through the process of meditation when the *Yogi* reaches the effulgent experience of the Self, he has, no doubt, crossed all *"non-apprehensions"* of Truth and, therefore, also all his *'misapprehensions'* about himself.

This is possible only when the devilish forces of likes and dislikes are destroyed and eliminated within the individual seeker's bosom.

Having crossed over the ocean of delusion and having destroyed

all the monsters *(Rakshasas)* of negative tendencies, showed by the mental equipment in an individualised Self, the meditator enters the realm of the Self, to rediscover for himself the voiceless peace which he has but temporarily lost. Self is of the nature of Peace-Auspiciousness-Beauty *(Shantam-Sivam-Sundaram).* And this experience of the Self, the Eternal, is permanent, and he thereafter, ever lives in himself an unbroken experience of endless peace and bliss. He is the one Who revels in the *Atman (Atmaram).*

This crucial word *'Atmaram',* poetic in itself, is highly suggestive to a student of the Indian Upanishads and the Hindus classics. Shankara, a master of the Hindu traditions, brings the entire story of *Ramayana* to pack up the words of this stanza firmly into its mighty beauty. *Valmiki* who wrote *Ramayana,* not only wanted to give to his readers a complete picture of an ideal man living all possible conditions, but he has also his own lived experience of the Self to express. Valmiki was no mere author and publisher. He was essentially a man of realisation, a champion of the scriptures. This inner symbolisms and significances of the *Ramayana* are generally lost sight of by the students, who are charmed away by the minute beauties in the workmanship of his pen. Shankara in this stanza hints at the deep significance of Ramayana taken as a whole.

The very name of the hero of this great classic is significant and suggestive: Ram[1] means *"the one reveller who revels everywhere in all bosoms".* The Self, Ram, wedded to Sita its own nature of Peace lives on joyously with unperturbed equanimity, both in the kingdom of Ayodhya and in the jungles of his exile. His sorrows start when his consort 'Peace' falls a prey into the hands of Ravana, the ten-headed-monster. This represents the lower animal nature in an individual, which has ten-heads even today—the five organs-of-perception and the five organs-of-action. The kingdoms of the secular and of the materialist can never sustain for long within the boundaries of the *Aryavarta,* the land of the *Sanatana Dharma,* the garden of spirituality. In an era of *Rama Rajya* Ravanas cannot be the governors.

Rama, then seeking for his consort has necessarily to cross the ocean, reach *Lanka,* destroy the demoniac forces and rediscover Sita His lost Peace. Shankara mentions in this stanza that the ocean to be

1. Sarve-Ramanti Iti = Rama.

bridged over is the delusory attachments and fascinations, and the forces that array themselves against *Ram* are the negative tendencies, which are natural in a deluded mind. When, the inner personality is purified and rehabilitated, Peace, the Eternal Consort of the Self, is regained. Thereafter, the man-of-realisation rules over the kingdom of life, from his capital called the Effortless *(Ayodhya).*

It is only in Sanskrit that a classic can be summarised by the suggestiveness of the words that are at once directly describing the highest Spiritual Truth!

बाह्यनित्यसुखासक्तिं
हित्वात्मसुखनिर्वृतः ।
घटस्थदीपवत्स्वस्थः
स्वान्तरेव प्रकाशते ॥ ५१ ॥

Bahya-Anitya-Sukh-Asaktim
Hitva-Atama-Sukh-Nirvritah
Ghatasta-Deepavat-Svastah
Svantareva Prakasate 51

बाह्य—external, **अनित्य**—illusory, **सुखासक्ति**—attachment for happiness, **हित्वा**—after having, **अ.त्मसुखनिर्वृतः**—satisfied with the bliss coming from within, **घटस्थदीपवत्**—like a lamp placed inside a jar, **स्वस्थः**—comfortably placed, **स्वान्तः** within himself, **एव**—alone, **प्रकाशते**—shines.

51. The self-abiding Jivan Mukta, *relinquishing all his attachments to the illusory external happiness and satisfied with the bliss derived from the* Atman, *shines inwardly like a lamp placed inside a jar.*

The goal of the seekers is no doubt the ending of all sorrows and the achievement of perfect joy. And he is called a man-of-realisation who has withdrawn his Consciousness entirely from all his identifications with his body, mind and intellect. Naturally, therefore, he will not be conscious of the objects of these three layers of matter: namely the world of sense-objects, the variety of feelings

and the array of ideas. For, to the Self, in the Self, there is nothing but the Self to illumine.

But, when a self-effulgent Truth has nothing else other than Itself to illumine, in Its own infinite glory how will It exist? This will be now the doubt in every student of Vedanta, who is approaching the *theory* of Self-realisation, especially during his early days of study, when he is trying to appreciate philosophy through his own limited intellectual evaluations.

The condition of the Pure Consciousness, when it has no other objects to be conscious of except the Self, is beautifully brought out in this analokgy of Sree Shankara. When a lighted lamp is put on a table, no doubt, its glowing illumination plays upon the surfaces of the various objects in the room and in varying degree of intensity it illumines the objects. But as soon as that lighted lamp is slowly and carefully lowered into a pot or a jar, the light of the lamp must come to illumine only the inner space of the jar. Similarly, Consciousness, while playing through the equipments, no doubt gets reflected upon the objects and provides us with the knowledge of objects; but when we have withdrawn the Consciousness from the vehicles into Itself, it can illumine only Itself.

It is said in the stanza that at this stage of meditation the Self *"shines inwardly alone"*. This should not be misunderstood to mean only the direct dictionary-meaning of the term 'inward'. "When the Consciousness is withdrawn into the Self, it illumines the *within*"—is a statement that is couched in the Vedantic technical language. In Vedanta subtility of a thing is measured by its pervasiveness, and in Vedanta the subtler is conceived as interior to the grosser. Naturally, therefore, the inner-most Self, is the subtlest of the subtle—which means that it is all-pervading and that nothing pervades it. At the moment of Self-realisation if the Consciousness comes to Illumine *"within"*, as the stanza says, in its secret import it suggests that the final experience is of the Infinite, All-pervading Self—the Subtlest of the Subtle—the Ever-effulgent—the Pure Awareness.

उपाधिस्थोऽपि तद्धर्मै-
रलिप्तो व्योमवन्मुनिः।

सर्वविन्मूढवत्तिष्ठे-
दसक्तो वायुवच्चरेत् ॥ ५२ ॥

Upadisthopi Tad-Dharmaihi
Alipto Vyomavat-Munihi
Sarvavit-Moodhavat Tishtet
Asakto-Vayuvat-Charet 52

उपाधिस्थोऽपि —though associated with *Upadhis* (conditionings), **तद्धर्मैः** —by their attributes, **अलिप्तः**—untained, **व्योमवत** —like the ether, **मुनिः**—the contemplative one, **सर्ववित्**—one who knows everything, **मूढवत्** like a fool, **तिष्ठेत**—remains, **असक्तः**—being unattached, **वायुवत्**—like the wind, **चरेत्**—moves about.

52. Though he lives in the conditionings (Upadhis), *he, the contemplative one, remains ever unconcerned with anything or he may move about like the wind, perfectly unattached.*

The state of a *Jeevanmukta* is described further here. The perfect man is one who has renounced all his clinging attachments to the finite sense-objects. The mind has a tendency to hold on to something or other, and what is the alternative offered here? It is the constant Bliss in him.

But what happens when, sometimes, he appears to be seemingly associated with the world? Even though he may be outwardly *cognising* and be aware of their existence he is not bound by them, for, he is a free man now, free from these *'Upadhis'*. As an illuminated person, he has learnt to live constantly in that knoweldge and illumination. In him limitations have no weight to pull him down.

He may move about as a devil, a child or as a drunken man, but he is not really so. He lives in the greater intoxication of Goodhood, and in the subtler Joy of Self-realisation. He may serve the Society or he may not. All the same, put him in any situation, and he will handle it without getting affected in the least by his actions or the results of his contact. He is a *"Stitha Prajna"* of the highest order, explained so elaborately in the Geeta.[1]

1. Read Swamiji's Discourses on Bhagavat Geeta—Chapter II-54-72.

The sky appears to be blue and a little grey, but the sky itself is not really so. Similarly the *Jeevan Mukta* may seem to be associated with the *Upadhis* and may wander about as an ordinary man in the work-a-day world, but he gets into that role and comes out of it unattached and untainted like the wind.

उपाधिविलयाद्विष्णौ
निर्विशेषं विशेन्मुनिः।
जले जलं वियद्व्योम्नि
तेजस्तेजसि वा यथा ॥ ५३ ॥

Upadhi-Vilayat-Vishnow
Nirvisesham Viseth Munihi
Jale-Jalam Vivat-Vyomni
Teja-Stejasi Va Yatha 53

उपाधिविलयात्—On the destruction of the *Upadhis* or Conditionings, **विष्णौ**—in the All-pervading Spirit, **निर्विशेषं**—totally, **विशेत्**–is absorbed, **मुनिः**—the contemplative one, **जले**—into the water, **जलं**—water, **वियत्**—the space, **व्योम्नि**—into the space, **तेजः**—light, **तेजसि**—into the light, **वा**—and, **यथा**—just as.

53. On the destruction of the Upadhis, *the contemplative one is totally absorbed in* 'Vishnu', *the All-pervading Spirit, like water into water, space into space and light into light.*

The *'Upadhi'* in me that has occasioned the expression of my personality is my identification with my body, mind and intellect. No doubt, it may appear that there are other limiting factors, but all of them arise because of one's association with these "three evils". The seeker who wants to end the conditioned existence and discover the whole in him should withdraw his mind from the said *'Upadhis'*. When I no more identify myself with the individuality in me, when the ego-centric existence, which is the Reality reflected in the mind-and-intellect, is destroyed, then "like water into water, space into space and light into light" I come to merge with the *Vishnu,* the All-

pervading. Naturally, when my limited existence is made unlimited, I can be nothing else than the All-pervading. Naturally, when my limited existence is made unlimited, I can be nothing else than the All-pervading. The stains on the mirror having been washed out, the reflection is now brighter and clearer.

When the equipments are destroyed, the Muni, a man of reflection *(Manana Sheelavan),* comes to experience the inner Bliss without any admixture or qualitative distinction *(Nirviseshatvam).* When the *Vishnu* or the All-pervasive nature of one's own Self is realised as the Self in all, one comes to remain at-one-moment with Him in eternal joy *losing one's own limited* individuality.

यल्लाभान्नापरो लाभो
यत्सुखान्नापरं सुखम् ।
यज्ज्ञानान्नापरं ज्ञानं
तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५४ ॥

Yallabhat-Na-Aparo Labho
Yat-Sukhat-Na-Aparam Sukham
Yat-Gyanat-Na-Aparam Gyanam
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 54

यल्लाभात्—from the attainment of which, **न**—not, **अपरः**—other, **लाभः**—attainment, **यत्सुखात्**—from the blessedness of which, **न**—not, **अपरं**—other, **सुखं**—blessedness, **यज्ज्ञानात्**—from the knowledge of which, **न**—not, **अपरं**—other, **ज्ञानं**—Knowledge, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman, **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**—realise.

54. Realise That *to be Brahman, the attainment of which leaves nothing more to be attained, the blessedness of which leaves no other blessing to be desired, and the knowledge of which leaves nothing more to be known.*

These three following stanzas in *Atma-Bodham* try to indicate

the Supreme Brahman by a technical process used in Vedanta to express the Absolute called *Tatastha Lakshana*—"an attempt at definition by differentiation yet in consonance with it". In indicating, for example, the house of Sat-Prakashji we may say, "That house on which the crow sits is his house". The crow does not permanently sit there—the crow is not part of that house. Showing the crow we indicate the house separately from other similar houses. The house is, of course, understood as the building without the crow on it. Even when the crow has flown away the knower of the house can recognise it from all other houses. This method is called *Tatastha Lakshana.*

The Supreme experience is explained here as the greatest gain, the greatest knowledge: having gained which no more is felt any sense of incompleteness and so none will like to add any more gains to it; having enjoyed the Bliss of the Self, none will strive for a greater Bliss; having known which there will never be (any more) any thirst to know anything more—the State of Absolute Gain-Bliss-Knowledge is Brahman, the experience of the Self.

All struggles to gain new acquisitions, to add fresh joys, and to strive for more knowledge indicate the sense of dissatisfaction felt by the imperfect. Imperfection belongs to the individuality in us, the ego *(Jiva).* When the *Jiva* rediscovered itself to be the Self, all imperfections, it so far felt, are understood by it to be the destiny of its matter envelopments, the Body-Mind-Intellect, and, therefore, in that condition of Spiritual rediscovery, the realised one finds that all his struggles have ended.

That, in experiencing which we come to feel such an endless fullness in our life, is the Supreme Goal.

यद्दृष्ट्वा नापरं दृश्यं
यद्भूत्वा न पुनर्भवः।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नापरं ज्ञेयं
तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५५ ॥

Yad-Drishtva-Na-Aparam-Drisyam
Yad-Bhootva Na-Punar-Bhavah
Yad-Gnatva Na-Aparam Gneyam
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 55

यद्दृष्ट्वा—which, when seen, **न**—not, **अपरं**—anything else, **दृश्यं**—to be seen, **यद्भूत्वा**—which having become, **न**—not, **पुनर्भवः**—to be born again (in the world), **यज्ज्ञात्वा**—which when knowing, **न**—not, **अपरं**—anything else, **ज्ञेयं**—to be known, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman, **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**realise.

55. Realise that to be Brahman which, when seen, leaves nothing more to be seen, which having become one is not born again in this world, and which, when knowing leaves nothing else to be known.

In so perfect a state of tranquility, peace and perfection, there is no further demand from within us to gain anything else to make us more perfect. If there by yet any lingering demands, then we have to consider ourselves still to be imperfect. The highest state of existence is that Supreme-Joy-Experience, when there are no thought eruptions, when we no longer exist as the ugly Ego-centre. In the experience of this Absolute Bliss when the mind and intellect have ceased to function, Truth dazzles forth in all its essential natural Beauty Divine.

All other intellectual endeavours are but reflections of the Self on the objects. *Atmavidya* gives the realisation of Knowledge Itself. All other knowledge *of* things is conditioned, and they are apprehended by this Eternal light which illumines the entire worlds of Its own projections. Having known this Pure Awareness, nothing more remains to be *known*. Having become that Eternal Being, the Subject, there is no more any object other than It for It to Illumine! Having obtained a glimpse of that Reality, there is nothing more to be seen or understood. Having awakened to that Consciousness, all the misconceptions are removed. Having burnt our ignorance (*Avidya*) the seeds of bondage (*Vasanas*) get charred.

तिर्यगूर्ध्वमधः पूर्णं
सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयम् ।
अनन्तं नित्यमेकं य-
त्तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५६ ॥

Tiryak-Oordhwa-Madhah Poornam
Sat-Chit-Ananda-Madvayam
Anantam-Nityam-Ekam-Yad
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 56

तिर्यक्–all the quarters, **ऊर्ध्वं**—above, **अधः**—below, **पूर्णं**—fills, **सच्चिदानन्द**—which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute, **अद्वयं**—Non-dual, **अनन्तं**—infinite, **नित्यं**—eternal, **एकं**—one, **यत्**—which, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman, **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**—realise.

56. Realise that to be Brahman which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute, which is Non-dual, Infinite, Eternal and One, and which fills all the quarters—above and below, and all that exists between.

East and West, above and below, here and everywhere permeates that dynamic Reality. When I am aware of that Consciousness and live that Experience, this outer world of Consciousness is no more available for me—the world that I perceive now with my limited body-mind-intellect equipment. How can I see the front or rear, top or bottom of that One Homogeneous mass of Consciousness when there is nothing other than It everywhere? I cannot say the 'front'—because the 'front' of what?—A limited thing alone can have parts or sides. Thus, we experience this endlessness of Infinite Bliss, which is One without-a-second. This world of attachment and sorrow is because of the self-dissipating extrovertedness and the delusory interests, wrongly created by our mind for the individuality in us.

There is no experience when there is the only One Reality, and the nature of the Paramatman in you is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. This

experience of Pure Being cannot be described, because It will then be limited by the feeble powers of our speech. It is that Light which is Eternally here in you, and everywhere you roam about. Moments of perfect attunement with It are the moments of Self-realisation.

अतद्व्यावृत्तिरूपेण
वेदान्तैर्लक्ष्यतेऽद्वयम् ।
अखण्डानन्दमेकं य-
त्तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५७ ॥

Atat-Vyavriti-Roopena
Vedanthaih Lakshyate-Advayam
Akhand-Anandam-Ekam Yad-
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 57

अतत्—not this, **व्यावृत्तिरूपेण**-by the process (of negation), **वेदान्तैः**—by Vedanta philosophy, **लक्ष्यते**—indicated, **अद्वयम्**— non-dual **अखण्डानन्दं**Indivisible and Blissful, **एकं**—one, **यत्**—which, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman, **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**—realise.

57. Realise that to be Brahman which is Non-dual, Indivisible, One and Blissful, and which is indicated in Vedanta as the Immutable Substratum, realised after the negation of all tangible objects.

Reference is made here to the 'process of negation', which was explained earlier. None can directly reach the All-pervading Brahman who is not an object-of-cognition, but is Itself the subjective Reality, ever illumining all thoughts and actions. Being One without-a-second. It does not admit of any difference from similar or dissimilar objects. This Indivisible and Immutable Self is not an impotent factor but a *positive* state of Infinite Bliss. The Upanishads indicate that this Self is reached by a process of negation of what It is not and of assertion of what It is—the very substratum for all the existence.

Are not our minds limited? Are not our thoughts in their

impurity ever unsteady? Are not the objects of cognition ever-changing and of a perishable nature? What is it that is changeless in all this welter of change? What is the one Life Force on account of which there is the manifestation of matter? Who illumines the inert matter? Who injects matter with the vigour and vitality of Life? What exists behind all this pluralistic existence? Which is the Homogeneous and the all-permeating spirit in all objects? What keeps all things in one loving embrace, like the string in a garland of pearls? That is the substratum, the basis of our own Self, which cannot be objectively pursued, but can be subjectively experienced as the Pure Consciousness (*Atman*).

In the earlier three stanzas the Self was indicated with a definition "by differentiation yet in consonance with it" technically called as *Tatastha Lakshana*. From here onwards we have a description of the Life Spark in us by the direct method called *Swaroopa Lakshana*.

अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य तस्या-
नन्दलवाश्रिताः ।
ब्रह्माद्यास्तारतम्येन
भवन्त्यानन्दिनोऽखिलाः ॥ ५८ ॥

Akhandananda-Roopasya Tasya-
Ananda-Lava-Asritah
Bhramadyah-Taratamyena
Bhavanty-Anandino Akihlah 58

अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य—Whose nature is unbroken Bliss, **तस्य**—His, **आनन्दलवाश्रिताः**—depending only upon a particle of this Bliss, **ब्रह्माद्याः**—the Creator and other deities, **तारतम्येन**—in proportion, **भवन्ति**—are, **आनन्दिनः**—enjoying the Bliss, **अखिलाः**—all.

58. Deities like Brahma and others[1] taste only a particle, of the unlimited Bliss of Brahman and enjoy in proportion their share of that particle.

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1. From the Creator Himself (Brahmaji) down to the most undeveloped worm, the most insignificant unicellular organism all enjoy but a share from a minute particle of this Infinite Bliss of the Absolute (Brahman).

That Truth which is by nature Absolute Bliss is really endless, although the quantity actually enjoyed differs, according to the capacity of the individual: be he an ordinary mortal, or a meritorious and righteous man or a Deva. An infinitesimal part of that Infinite Bliss is the lot of even *Indra* the King of the Gods. Brahma, the creator, the Cosmic Soul, tastes only a particle of this limitless Bliss—*Brahmananda.*

On a small portion of this depends the entire world of joy. How can poor mind and intellect measure the magnitude of this immeasurable depth of *'Swaroopanandа'*? Remember this limitless joy is *not* actually measured here. We are only shown how even the ethereal joys of even the creator is but a negligible joy borrowed from it. In fact you are that Absolute Bliss itself. A relative picture has been drawn here to give us a wild quantitative measure of the infinitude, in terms of a finite yardstick.

In our daily transactions in the materialistic world, we do employ the same method. For example, in the annual meeting of a very successful Business Company, the Managing Directors may in their report suggest that they are planning to construct extensions involving a large sum of expenditure, and may enumerate a dozen other items of expenditure for the convenience and recreation of the staff, involving another large amount apart from a three months' bonus to all the workers. The shareholders, flabbergasted at this colossal amount involved would surely get ready to vote the suggestions down. But if the management were to wind up their reports saying that this entire amount, budgetted for spending is but a mere 2 per cent of the total profits, all protests are withdrawn as everybody gets a clear picture of the total profit made.

This is the method that has been adopted here by Shankara. If we are told that the Truth is of the nature of Bliss Absolute an ordinary student does not get a clear quantitative concept of the *Brahmananda.* No doubt there is happiness in everybody's life; there is none who lives as a sentient organism without its limited share of joy. If all these moments of joy were to be added on, the joy so experienced by all living creatures from the Creator down to a blade of grass, would be the total Joy (*Vishayananda*) in the universe. This sum of experienced joys, by all the sentient bosoms from the day of creation till today, is, it is said here, "but an infinitesimal portion

(*lava*) of the Bliss Absolute''. When this much is told, the student may probably get a rough and ready concept of the Absolute Bliss. This is the only available method by which the teacher can give at least a vague intellectual notion of the Infinite Bliss, experienced by a man of realisation when he has transcended all the limitations of his mortal existence.

तद्युक्तमखिलं वस्तु
व्यवहारस्तदन्वितः।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म
क्षीरे सर्पिरिवाखिले॥ ५९॥

Tad-Yuktam-Akhilam Vastu
Vyavahara Tadanvitah
Tasmad-Sarvagatam Brahma
Ksheere-Sarpiri-Eva Akhile 59

तद्युक्तम्—pervaded by that (Brahman), **अखिलं**—all, **वस्तु**—objects, **व्यवहारः**—actions, **तदन्वितः**—are possible because of that, **तस्मात्**—therefore, **सर्वगतम्**—permeating everything, **ब्रह्म**—the Brahman, **क्षीरे**—in the milk, **सर्पिः**—butter, **इव**—like, **अखिले**—in everything.

59. All objects are pervaded by Brahman. All actions are possible because of Brahman: therefore Brahman permeates everything as butter permeates milk.

What is real in the phenomenal world is *Brahman,* the substratum, and when It is All-pervading in nature, how can anything escape Its touch? He is the Illuminator of all actions and thoughts, whether here within his body, or there without, in the world outside. Without Its grace the sense-organs in the body are mere holes on the flesh and the outer world of objects are also gross inert matter without any smptom of life but for this all-permeating life-giving fire of existence that flows through them all.

Butter permeates milk although it is not easy for us to see it directly in the milk. *Brahman* likewise permeates *all objects*. Butter is extracted from milk by churning: so also the *Atman* can be separated from the world of names and forms by intense meditation. And when the spirit is experienced, the world of plurality is no more perceived—as in butter there is no more any milk.

अनण्वस्थूलमह्रस्वम्-
अदीर्घमजमव्ययम् ।
अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं
तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६० ॥

Ananwa-Astoola-Mahraswa-
Adeergha-Maja-Mavyayam
Aroopa-Guna-Varna-Akhyam
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 60

अनणु—neither subtle, **अस्थूलं**—nor gross, **अह्रस्वं**—neither short, **अदीर्घं**—nor long, **अजं**—without birth, **अव्ययं**—without change, **अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं**—without form, qualities, colour and name, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman, **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**—realise.

60. Realise that to be Brahman which is neither subtle nor gross: neither short nor long: without birth or change: without form, qualities, colour and name.

In the last stanza it was stated that all objects are pervaded by Brahman. Elaborating the point further, It is here referred to as neither gross nor subtle. It pervades all. It is the substratum for everything. Split or cleave even an atom, and there too we find but Its Presence.

Finite objects which are bound by limitations of space and time are either gross or subtle. But this timeless time and spaceless space, the Infinitude of the Infinite, cannot be bound by space-time-causation and hence can be only defined in negative terms such as 'neither gross nor subtle', etc.

What is born is the body, mind and intellect, and the objects of the outer world; *not* the Brahman who is the existence in the very progenitor of all creation, the very knower of the first Uncaused Cause. This Infinite Reality is irreducible, formless, with neither quality nor caste nor name. Naturally, It is indescribable. It cannot be an object of either our perception, or our feedlings or our thoughts. This is a description of the Infinite in the language-of negation.

Language has its own limitations. It can describe only themes that have qualities (*Guna*), or function (*Kriya*), or name (*Nama*), or qualifications (*Visesha*), or relationship with others (*Sambandh*). None of these are for the one Eternal Infinte, substratum for everything, and hence It must elude language and remain as indescribable. This technique of describing the Infinite by the process of negation is made use of only in our scriptures. These terms are to be considered as so many arrow-marks *indicating* Truth; they are not in themselves positive definitions of That. Know That to be the Brahman.

यद्भासा भास्यतेऽर्कादि
भास्यैर्यत्तु न भास्यते ।
येन सर्वमिदं भाति
तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६१ ॥

Yad-Bhasa Bhasyate-Arkadi
Bhasyaihi-Yatu-Na-Bhasyate
Yena-Sarvam-Edam-Bhati
Tad-Brahmety-Avadharayet 61

यद्भासा—by the light of which, **भास्यते**—are illuminated, **अर्कादि**—Sun and other (luminous orbs), **भास्यैः**—by the luminous orbs, **यः**—that, **तु**—indeed, **न**—not, **भास्यते**—is illuminated, **येन**—by which, **सर्वं**—all, **इदं**—this, **भाति**—shines, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that to be Brahman. **इति**—thus, **अवधारयेत्**—realise.

61. That by the light of which the luminous, orbs like the Sun,

and the Moon are illuminated, but which is not illumined by their light, realise that to be Brahman.

The Consciousness in me illumines for me the condition of the things around me. The total cosmic Consciousness is the same Illuminating Factor as within me, but without the conditionings of the individual ego. Even though the Sun illumines the different worlds of creation, he too derives his life from that Supreme force which is All-pervading. So, the Sun and the Moon are not having a special agency other than the Self in us for their illumination. That which illumines all others but which cannot be illumined by anything other than Itself is ever the illuminator and so, when there is no object for It to illumine, It illumines Itself. This Brahman, the Light of Consciousness is in Its own glory, unattached and unaffected, like the street-lamp, an example referred to in the earlier stanzas. Brahman is thus the light of all lights, the fountain head of Pure Consciousness and the mighty illuminator of all illuminations.

स्वयमन्तर्बहिर्व्याप्य
भासयन्नखिलं जगत् ।
ब्रह्म प्रकाशते वह्नि-
प्रतप्तायसपिण्डवत् ॥ ६२ ॥

Swayam-Antar-Bahir-Vyapya
Bhasayan-Akhilam Jagat
Brahma Prakasate Vahni
Pratapt-Ayasa-Pindavat 62

स्वयम्—Itself, **अन्तः**—inwardly, **बहिः**—outwardly, **व्याप्य**—pervading, **भासयन्**—illuminating, **अखिलं**—entire, **जगत्**—universe, **ब्रह्म**—Brahman, **प्रकाशते**—shines, **वह्निप्रतप्तायसपिण्डवत्**—like the fire permeating a red-hot iron-ball.

62. Pervading the entire universe outwardly and inwardly the Supreme Brahman shines of Itself like the fire that permeates a red-hot iron-ball and glows by itself.

The Supreme Brahman is the transcendental Truth which shines of Itself and It penetrates all the world of creation. It is not something other than the world of creation, for, It exists in and through them all at once as the material and the efficient cause, the Pure Consciousness. Thus it is stated that the outer world of finite experience is not something different from the subjective state of Reality.

Matter without spirit is dead, but matter and spirit when together in their nuptial, come to express themselves in the manifestations of life. The Supreme is the vital content in every particle of this world, and just as in the process of extracting butter out of milk, the Spirit can be separated from matter and realised through meditation in the pure heart-cave.

An iron-ball when in contact with fire for a long time comes to glow as fire itself. Similarly, even though the world of dead matter is inert, lifeless and stationary, when they play in the vitality of the Supreme Brahman, there is the manifestation of life. If the Paramatman does not lend Its grace to the created objects, there is no existence for our cognition and experience. The Infinite is unborn, deathless, omnipotent and all-pervading. The created world of the finite things and beings is born, mortal, limited in its powers and scope. Thus the finite and the Infinite are of opposite nature. How then can we see the intelligence and existence, which are the nature of the Self, in matter which has neither of these qualities. The red-hot iron-ball example explains it.

Iron-ball is black in colour and cold to the touch; fire is golden in colour and hot. The colour and the heat of fire penetrates the iron-ball, when it, for a sufficiently long time comes in contact with the fire. So too, when inert and insentient matter is presided over by the Spirit, the *Sat-Chit-Ananda* nature of the Spirit gets transferred on to the matter.

जगद्विलक्षणं ब्रह्म
ब्रह्मणोऽन्यन्न किञ्चन ।

ब्रह्मान्यद्भाति चेन्मिथ्या
यथा मरुमरीचिका ॥ ६३ ॥

Jagat Vilakshanam Brahma
Brahmano-Annyat-Na-Kimchana
Brahma-Annyat-Bhati-Chet Mithya
Yatha Maru-Mareechika 63

जगद्विलक्षणं—which is other than the universe, **ब्रह्म**—the Brahman, **ब्रह्मणः**—apart from Brahman, **अन्यत्**—other, **न**—not, **किञ्चन**—a little, **ब्रह्मान्यत्**—other than the Brahman, **भाति**—shines, , **चेत्**—if, **मिथ्या**—unreal, **यथा**—just as, **मरुमरीचिका**—the mirage.

63. Brahman is other than this, the universe. There exists nothing that is not Brahman. If any object other than Brahman appears to exist, it is unreal like the mirage.

In the previous example the iron-ball is other than the fire: Is then the Brahman other than the universe which has an empirical existence; or is It in Itself ever uncontaminated by the world of matter?

What appears as the world of diversity with its different names and forms to the ignorant is realised by the illumined to be an indivisible and non-dual Brahman. This multiplicity being illusory, does not defile the Brahman. In the case of the desert and the mirage, the desert alone exists. The ignorant sees the delusion of water-pools in the desert, called the mirage. When once a deluded mind has seen a mirage, it can multiply in its misapprehensions, such as the waters of the mirage having waves, and even the sun reflecting on the water surface, etc.

The mirage is different from the desert, yet without the desert the mirage cannot exist. And the mirage waters can never wet even a grain of the desert sand. Similarly, if one thinks that this world of plurality is real, he is mistaken, for it does not and it cannot exist without the Brahman. Its existence is like the mirage which is unreal; the world of plurality can never contaminate the Infinite.

The end of the illusion which gives us the wrong notion that the names and forms are real is the end of the perception of the plurality and the agitations caused by them in our bosom. In one respect, therefore, the Ultimate Reality—the Supreme Brahman, is different and, from that point of view, It is *other* than the Universe. And yet, viewed from another angle, It so fully permeates everything which It has created that there is nothing other than the Brahman, and that if there should be anything different from It, it can only be an unreal appearance.

दृश्यते श्रूयते यद्य-
ब्द्रह्मणोऽन्यन्न तद्भवेत् ।
तत्त्वज्ञानाच्च तद्ब्रह्म
सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयम् ॥ ६४ ॥

Drisyate Sruyate Yad-Yat
Brahmano-Annyat-Na-Tad Bhavet
Tatva-Gyanat-Cha Tat-Brahma
Sachchidananda-Madvayam 64

दृश्यते—which is perceived, **श्रूयते**—which is heard, **यद्यत्**—all that, **ब्रह्मणोऽन्यत्**—apart from Brahman, **न**—not, **तत्**—that, **भवेत्**—can be, **तत्त्वज्ञानात्**—from the knowledge of the Reality, **च**—and, **तद्ब्रह्म**—that Brahman, **सच्चिदानन्दं**—which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute, **अद्वयम्**—non-dual.

64. All that is perceived, or heard, is Brahman and nothing else. Attaining the knowledge of the Reality, one sees the Universe as the non-dual Brahman, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute.

Whatever you hear or see or perceive through the sense-organs cannot be anything other than the Brahman, just as whatever one sees in one's dream-state cannot be anything other than one's own

waking-state mind. The Consciousness is that which presides over and lends its potentiality in all our activities of perception, feeling and thinking. It is the awareness in us that illumines the knowledge, ignorance, anger, love and such other hosts of feelings and emotions in us. If Consciousness does not give life to the 'Prana' in us, where is the existence in us?

Realise, therefore, that whatever exists either in this limited body, mind and intellect (*microcosm*), or in the outer created world (*macrocosm*) they are all Its own manifestation and nothing else. When this Truth is completely realised and experienced, one cannot but see the entire universe as a huge play-field in which the Paramatman alone revels as Sat-Chit-Ananda Absolute—for, It is One and One only '*Ekam Eva Adviteeyam Brahma*'.

सर्वगं सच्चिदात्मानं
ज्ञानचक्षुर्निरीक्षते ।
अज्ञानचक्षुर्नेक्षेत
भास्वन्तं भानुमन्धवत् ॥ ६५ ॥

Sarvagam Sachchidatmanam
Gyana-Chakshur-Nireekshate
Agyana-Chakshur-Na-Eeksheta
Bhasvantam-Bhanum-Andhavat 65

सर्वगं—which is present everywhere, **सच्चिदात्मानं**—*Atman*, which is Pure Consciousness, **ज्ञानचक्षुः**—eyes-of-wisdom, **निरीक्षते**—perceives, **अज्ञानचक्षुः**—one whose vision is obscured by ignorance, **न**—not, **ईक्षेत**—sees, **भास्वन्तं**—which is shining, **भानु**—the Sun, **अन्धवत्**—like a blind man.

65. Though Atman is Pure Consciousness and ever present everywhere, yet It is perceived by the eye-of-wisdom alone: but one whose vision is obscured by ignorance he does not see It; as the blind do not see the resplendent Sun.

Just as a blind man cannot see the Sun, so also the person whose faculty of perception is not prepared to be sharp enough to rasp the Truth, and therefore, he who has not developed in himself, the eye-of-wisdom, who is not discriminative enough to reject the unreal from the real, whose mind is not Pure, who has not the serene light of knowledge within him to illumine his right judgement of things, who has not done sufficient penance to acquire single-pointed devotion, who still superimposes the finite qualities of the outer world of objects on the Infinite Self—Such an unprepared man cannot readily experience the Presence of the Eternal Self as his own true nature. It is not that the *Atman* is not Supreme, but it is the limiting factors in the seeker after Truth that veils and distorts the beauty of the Absolute Reality; it is the blindness of the person that makes the Sun dark to him, even though the Sun shines ever bright and brilliant.

All great philosophers had to, in the last analysis, take recourse to an imaginary power in the human intellect, and with the help of that faculty they explain to the intellectual students how seekers gain the perception of the Reality. Theoretically the Vedantic teachers boldly propound that on transcending all the equipments all seekers will *realise* the Self, the Truth. The students in the beginning try to follow the teacher only with their intellect. Perception or apprehension as understood by the intellect cannot take place without some instrument-of-knowing other than the object-of-knowledge. Carrying this impression, the student asks as to how one can experience the Truth when once the body-mind-intellect-equipment is transcended. The Rishis import here the idea of the faculty of intuition *(Gyana Chakshu)* for the benefit of such students.

Contemplative power alone can apprehend the Reality; this apprehension is not an objective experience; it is an uncompromising and total Becoming.

An ordinary mind turned outward, in perceiving, feeling and thinking of the objects-of-the-world, gets so agitated that in that restless bosom the Supreme cannot be captured in experience. The mind that is slowly and intelligently withdrawn from its extrovert fascinations and trained to turn inward, develops in itself the power

to apprehend the Reality. Therefore, the intuitive power (*Gyana Chakshu*) is nothing other than a mind turned inward and held in attention. In Geeta a mind so prepared as a true vehicle to reach Knowledge, itself is called *Gyanam*. In this context, the twenty-values of life mentioned in the Geeta, in preparing this *Gyanam,* are worthy of our attention.[1]

श्रवणादिभिरुद्दीप्त
ज्ञानाग्निपरितापितः ।
जीवस्सर्वमलान्मुक्तः
स्वर्णवद्द्योतते स्वयम् ॥ ६६ ॥

Sravanadibhih Uddeeptah
Gyanagni-Paritapitah
Jeevah Sarva-Malan-Muktah
Swarnavat Dyotate Swayam 66

श्रवणादिभिः—by hearing and so on, **उद्दीप्तः**—kindled, **ज्ञानाग्नि-परितापितः**—heated in the fire of knowledge, **जीवः**—the *Jiva* (individuality), **सर्वमलात्**—from all impurities, **मुक्तः**—freed, **स्वर्णवत्**–like gold, **द्योतते**—shines, **स्वयम्**—of itself.

66. The 'Jiva' *free from impurities, being heated in the fire of knowledge kindled by hearing and so on, shines of itself like gold.*

In obtaining knowledge on Vedanta the three courses

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1. Refer Swamiji's Commentary on Geeta, Ch. XIII, stanzas 7 to 11: "Humility, Unpretentiousness, Non-injury, Forbearance, Uprightness, Following the Teacher, Purity, Steadiness, Self-control, Detachment from sense-objects, Absence of egoism, Constant reflection upon life's imperfections, Non-attachment, Non-identification with son-wife-home and the rest, Constant equanimity both in conducive and non-conducive circumstances, Unswerving devotion to the Lord, Solitude, Distaste for blabbering crowds, Constant Study of Scriptures and Diligent attempt to understand the deeper meaning of the Reality as indicated in the scriptures" ... These constitute the 20-values of life.

recommended are (1) listening to the truth from the scriptures as explained by the teacher (*Sravana*); (*b*) reasoning off the truths heard (*Manana*) and (2) deep contemplation on what has been heard and reasoned out (*Nidhidhyasana*).[1]

Spiritual discipline is intended to clean the mind-off its impurities. As such removal of the ignorance (*avidya*) alone enables the revelation of the Absolute Truth. It is a spontaneous experience of one's own Self, and an earnest seeker after Truth, who is able to kindle the fire of knowledge in his Pure bosom and who is free from doubts and fears, realises the Self in him. So the ego-centric personality (*Jeevatman*) has to rid itself off its own limitations when it rediscovers its real nature as the Eternal Self. The ore as it comes up from the gold-mines is mixed up with a lot of impurities, and when the washed off Gold is heated and poured in, its molten brilliance acquires to itself its real glory and beauty. So too the individuality when heated in meditation and the molten Self is poured out, it comes to shine in its essential immortal contents.

हृदाकाशोदितो ह्यात्मा
बोधभानुस्तमोऽपहृत् ।
सर्वव्यापी सर्वधारी
भाति भासयतेऽखिलम् ॥ ६७ ॥

Hridakaso-Udito Hi Atma
Bodha-Bhanu Tamo-Apahrit
Sarvavyapi Sarvadhari
Bhati Bhasayate-Akhilam 67

हृदाकाशोदितः—which rises in the sky of the heart, **हि**—verily, **आत्मा**—the *Atman*, **बोधभानुः**—the Sun of Knowledge, **तमः**—darkness, **अपहृत्**—destroys, **सर्वव्यापी**—which is pervading everything, **सर्वधारी**—sustains all, **भाति**—shines, **भासयते**—makes to shine, **अखिलम्**—everthing.

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1. For more elaborate discussion on these points read the chapter "Fall and Rise of Man" in the Introduction to Swamiji's Discourses on *Kenopanishad*.

67. The Atman, the Sun of Knowledge that rises in the sky of the heart, destroys the darkness of the ignorance, pervades and sustains all and shines and makes everything to shine.

Hridaya is generally translated as the Heart. Here the term is not to mean the biological organ that pumps the blood ... but here it means that arena in the mental field from where the noble and the humane thoughts gurgle up and flow. The term heart here is used in the same sense in which we call a man of love and goodness as a man of heart.

When there is ethical purity and moral goodness then alone in that bosom can spiritual unfoldment and the consequent divine experiences come.

As at the approach of dawn the darkness rolls off and the light of its own glory brings everything clearly to our cognition so too at the Dawn of Wisdom, all Knowledge bursts up to our awareness.

दिग्देशकालाद्यनपेक्ष्य सर्वगं
शीतादिहृन्नित्यसुखं निरंजनम् ।
यस्स्वात्मतीर्थं भजते विनिष्क्रियः
स सर्ववित्सर्वगतोऽमृतो भवेत् ॥ ६८ ॥

॥ इत्यात्मबोधः समाप्तः ॥

Dik-Desa-Kalady-Anapekshya Sarvagam
Seetadi-Hrit-Nitya-Sukham Niranjanam
Yah-Swatma-Teertham Bhajate Vinishkriyah
Sa-Sarvavit-Sarvagato-Amrito Bhavet 68

Etya-Atma-Bodhah-Samaptah

दिग्देशकालादि—direction, space and time, **अनपेक्ष्य**—not depending upon, **सर्वगं**—which is present everywhere, **शीतादिहृत्**—which destroys cold, etc. **नित्यसुखं**—which is Bliss-Eternal, **निरञ्जनं**—which is stainless, **यः**—who **स्वात्मतीर्थं** the holy place of his own

Atman, **मजते** —worships, **विनिष्क्रियः**—renouncing all activities, **सः** —He, **सर्ववित्** —All-knowing, **सर्वगतः**—All-pervading, **अमृतः** —Immortal, **भवेत्** —becomes.

Thus concludes Atma-Bodh-Text

68. He who renouncing all activities, who is free of all the limitations of time, space and direction, worships his own Atman *which is present everywhere, which is the destroyer of heat and cold, which is Bliss-Eternal and stainless, becomes All-knowing and All-pervading and attains thereafter Immortality.*

Whether the sea is stormy or calm, the Sun always shines on it. Similarly the Pure *Atman,* the Truth which is behind time, space and casuality, which is All-pervading, which has no duality, which is the Pure Consciousness in all awareness, which is the substratum on which all this pluralistic things play about, that is the One Consciousness which illumines the entire creation. Without It nothing will exist anywhere. Know that to be your own Self.

He who renounces all his desires and activities, his attachments, likes and dislikes and his very contact with the life of this ephemeral world of objects, and he who is ever at the shrine of the *Atman* striving with determination to enjoy the bliss of his own Self, that 'Mahatman' becomes All-knowing, All-pervasive Brahman Itself. There is immortality for him: for having reached that and having begun to experience that which has no beginning and end, he too becomes **IMMORTAL.** The dreamer, when he ends his dreams and wakes up becomes himself the waker; the limited ego on transcending the mind-intellect equipment becomes itself the Immortal Brahman.

ॐ तत् सत्।